The Religion of the Kuvi-Konds,

THEIR CUSTOMS

AND

FOLK-LORE.

FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES,

BY

REV. F. V. P. SCHULZE.

SALURU.

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PREFACE.

This publication consists of three parts—

1*st.*—The Religion of the Konds.

2*nd.*—Their Customs.

3*rd.*—Their Folk-lore.

It has been compiled with the object of creating feelings of interest and sympathy in the minds of those who have to come into touch with this simple and interesting race of people, be they Government servants or others unconnected with that service.

The whole contents of this little book is original and not compiled or taken from any other book. Everything was related to me in the fine Kuvi or Kond language.

These Konds, as will be seen by a perusal of this work, retain the old patriarchal form of government, their religion, like the old Grecian and Roman theocracies, invests the forests, streams and lakes with ruling deities, while Paramushesa takes the place of Jupiter. Besides this, there appears also a great difference between Roman and Grecian theocraties, whilst here Jupiter has a great swarm of deities round him, who all take some place in his relationship, similar to the Vedic deities. There is in the Kond religion only one God. He is the father, the creator of the world, he is good and wise, helping the poor and punishing the wicked. He himself told his people to worship evil spirits, that they may not harm them. So the evil spirits worship has been introduced

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by Paramushesa himself. Stories concerning Paramushesa in the Folk-lore throw a bright light upon this character. Some of them are very touching, some of a real philosophical character. To understand the religion of these Konds, it is absolutely necessary to read their Folk-lore, in connection with the first part of this book.

The ignorance and simplicity of this race is hard to comprehend. One small instance will serve to illustrate this. Once, on a certain day, when many of these Konds were standing in my office and I had to open my cash chest repeatedly, to meet a number of different payments, these Konds formed a group of interested spectators. They watched me, as I opened the chest, and putting my hand in extracted from the bag the exact number of rupees I required for each payment. After much deliberation and argument, as to how and whence this constant flow of silver rupees came, they decided that the chest possessed independent generating power of its own. "The "mother rupee" is hidden in there which brings forth all these rupees," they said. This supports the story in Folk-lore of the Oilseller who attributed generating power to the beam of his house.

If the publication of this little book succeeds in the object for which it was written, the Author will feel amply repaid for the trouble that he has had to overcome in its compilation, as he received all his information by personal association with these Konds.

SALURU,
14th March 1912.

F. V. P. SCHULZE.

PART I.

THE RELIGION OF THE KUVI-KONDS.

THE RELIGION OF THE KONDS.

The Kond believes in the existence of one good God and many evil spirits. The name of the good God is Paramushela or Paramushesa or Paramusheasi. Dharmu is another name of God, but this name is spoken with reference to the Sun, and cannot be used by a Christian Kond in his prayer.

Paramushela is the Creator of the whole universe. He loves his creation, but seems to be too weak to extricate his helpless people out of the power of evil spirits. There exist still many prayers directed to God the Creator. The address to God consists in the following words: "O Paramushela, Dada, Dhormu, Kadigei, and Gundukutteni." All these are names of the one great God and some stars to whom and to which Konds supplicate when they are in distress.

When the earth became more and more populated, sin also increased to such an extent that Paramushesa could not bear it any longer, wherefore he determined to destroy them all and sent a great flood over the whole earth.

After the flood was over and the earth was dry again, Paramushela wished to know, if any living being still existed to repopulate the earth. He therefore sent a crow with the order to find out if any one was still alive.

The crow flew over the whole earth but could not find anybody. At last it saw some leaf plates which people appeared to have lately used for their meals. The crow took these leaves and showed them to Paramushela.

Then he sent a woodpecker to find out the whereabouts of the people who had eaten from those leaf plates. He supposed that they had hidden themselves in a hollow tree. The woodpecker flew to the place where the leaves had been found and began to listen quietly round all the trees. At last it came to a big tree. From inside it heard the voices of two people talking together. Rejoiced that it had found out their hiding place, it quickly flew back to Paramushela and reported the matter.

Some servants were now sent out to fetch those men before God. Two people were found in the hole, a brother and his sister, who had lived together in this hollow tree since the great flood. On their appearing before God they were asked by Him three times who they were, and three times they replied that they were brother and sister. At first Paramushela was puzzled how to act, as their consanguinity precluded their marriage and the repopulation of the world again.

After deliberation God infected both with small-pox, and when their features were so distorted as to be unrecognizable by each other, he married the two to each other and by them the whole earth was repopulated.

Another version of the same legend states that the two were saved from being drowned in the flood by finding safety in a pot in which they were subsequently discovered.

After the Deluge all men lived together as brethren ; no caste existed.

After some time, however, when people began again to sin, Paramushela changed their languages and created the different castes, " that people might learn to obey."

Another version states that the first man and woman had five children, who were always quarrelling, so God gave each a different language which stopped all future disputes.

The Konds say that castes are as varied as the trees in a forest.

When, after some time, men became more gregarious in their habits, they had much to suffer from evil spirits.

The collective name of these spirits is Pēnu, (plural Pēnka). These pēnka have a variety of names, such as Gangapenu, Sonnolipenu, Zakiripenu, Horupenu, Bāāli-penu.

They, therefore, appeared before Paramushela and asked his assistance against their enemies, these evil spirits, whereupon God issued the following instructions and order:

You shall live in future upon and between these hills, cultivating the land, and although you are living amongst tigers, bears and leopards, they shall do you no harm, if you observe the following order:

You shall on stated occasions offer sacrifices, a cow, pig or fowl, to which must be added an offering of cereals and fruits whenever you receive a good harvest of grain or fruits.

In each Kond village there are usually three little temples for these Penka. The worship of each of them is different. There are four classes of priests distinguishable for one another. The Bedsani, the Sisa, the Dihera and the Tromba. The Bedsani, mostly two, are priestesses and their duty is to sing: the three others

are priests. The Sisa offers incense, while the Tromba beats the drum. The Dihera is the astrologer.

The Kond has no person or committee which exercises jurisdiction in caste matters over all or even over a particular district. Each village has its own Naidu or Hauta who is reverenced as their father. He is not appointed by the villagers; but from time immemorial the family of the Hauta has inherited this position. When the Hauta has no children his brother or his children will become Hautas of that village.

Each Hauta has as his assessors, the Tromba, the Sisa, the Dihera, the Bariki and the Salana or Dandasi. The Tromba is the village priest; the Sisa is the village musician; the Dihera, the village astrologer; and the Bariki and Salana are the village servants. This committee of six persons exercises jurisdiction over all offences against morality or caste regulations. When a man is expelled from his caste in one village, the sentence is communicated to the members of other villages who accept the ruling.

The village Hauta, as the head of the village, rules it together with his five abovenamed assessors in quite a patriarchal form of government. He deals with all classes of offences, be they of a public or private character. This can best be explained by illustrations.

Offence against Caste reduction.

If a man is charged with having committed an offence against his caste rules, he is brought before the village Hauta and he exhorts him to speak the truth.

If he denies the charge, the Hauta asks him to swear the following oath :—

I swear before these twelve collected men in this holy place that I have done no wrong, and to prove it, I pass my hand over the head of my accuser. May my strength be reduced in proportion to the number of hairs that fall from his head.

After this oath is exacted from him, the Hauta declares before the whole assembly that this man is free to go where he wishes and that no fault is found in him, declaring "as fire burns the wood to which the fire is applied, so may the man suffer harm by whom sin is wrongfully attributed."

Then the Hauta turns round to the accuser and says, "You have brought false evidence against the accused, therefore you are liable to pay all the costs which the accused would have had to pay had he been found guilty."

There is no help for it. The accuser has to pay for a big dinner which costs about Rs. 5. At the dinner the accuser calls for the accused and says "consent to partake of my meal; but if you are guilty, this meal which you take will prove injurious to your life," meaning thereby that some calamity will overtake him, a tiger may devour him, or a serpent may bite him or thieves may rob him or he may be attacked by some dangerous illness.

Then the accused again strongly protests that he is not at all guilty and is not afraid to partake of the meal and does so. After this is over the Hauta waits for a month to see if any harm befals the accused.

If nothing happens during the month, a new meeting is called and the accuser is again punished by having to stand the expenses of a second costly dinner. If, however, some calamity does overtake the accused within the given period, he is at once declared to be guilty and a heavy fine is inflicted upon him. He then confesses his fault and asks to be re-admitted to all his caste privileges, whereupon he is ordered to produce one rupee's worth of arrack, a rupee's worth of rice and about two or three rupees in ready cash. Then the whole village is invited to a big dinner. Before they begin to eat together, the Hauta takes a little gold ring which he heats and with it burns the tongue of the accused twice.

He then lifts the hand of the accused which is filled with the new cooked Zohorba rice to his forehead, uttering the words Zohorba, Zohorba, and turning to the assembly pronounces that this man is forgiven and re-admitted to all caste privilege and that no objection shall be raised by any one. Then he begins to eat the rice and all the others follow his example.

If an out-caste runs away and joins another village, unknown to his former village people, those villagers not knowing of his offence admit him into their society, but when the matter becomes known, they force him to pay the fine inflicted upon him. If the accused obeys he is admitted, and if he return to his own village, the proceedings of the 2nd village are recognized and a second fine is not again demanded. The sentence passed by the Hauta upon all out-castes is as follows :—As you do not obey and esteem us as your relatives, and me as your father while we regard you as such, none of us from this day shall enter your house, none will give you fire,

nor are you permitted to draw water from the well we use.

Offence against Morality.—A villager may (1) disobey the order of the Hauta, (2) He may be guilty of some offence against the public, (3) He may have committed an offence of a purely private nature. If he is found guilty and does not obey his Hauta, this sentence is pronounced against him. "You scorn and despise me to-day, in like manner I despise you. From this day a stain rests upon me and the same stain shall also rest upon you. Whenever any one who bearing your family name gets into any trouble, neither you nor your family shall have share in the meal which the accused has to pay." If the accused obeys the order of the Hauta and pays the fine which is inflicted upon him, which may be anything from four annas up to Rs. 100. (Let us take as an example an ordinary fine of Rs. 5), he brings some arrack, rice, an old cow and two pieces of money. A big dinner is given again to the whole village and all have to partake of it. The Hauta receives as his share one ear with a big piece of meat and one of the coins. The other coin the Hauta offers to the accused saying, "You have committed wrong, however we forgive you. Accept thy portion." In addition to this the Hauta presents him with a four anna piece.

After this all the village people dine together. At this time the Hauta divides his big share among those who rendered him their help, and the remainder between those who helped him in cooking and bringing firewood, and so forth. No one should presume that the Hauta has received the largest portion of meat. He takes only a comparatively small portion of it.

The accused has a right to appeal to any other Hauta. The two Hautas rehear the case and pronounce their decision. This verdict is conclusive. As all the inhabitants of a village live close together, all rumours of offences easily reach the ears of the Hauta who at once summons the accused and enquires into the case. The way usually adopted of bringing the complaint to the notice of the Hauta, is to talk over the matter first with the village Bariki, who is paid two annas, and thereupon carries the case before the Hauta. The Konds also recognize the ordeal as a test of guilt or innocence. A Kond, who is accused of a crime, if he denies having committed it, is asked to prove his innocence by an ordeal. Standing before a pot of boiling oil, the accused swears that he has not committed the offence and dips his hand into the boiling oil. If the hand suffers, as suffer it must, the guilt of the accused is established.

Gangapenu.

On a certain Wednesday the inhabitants of a village go to the temple of Gangapenu. There they kill a fowl. By the side of the temple is a small platter made of twisted bamboos. The priest takes some earth and some of the blood of the fowl and places them on the bamboo platter, which is decorated with flowers and painted with saffron. The priest begins by lifting up the dish, but, as it seems too light, he again adds some more earth to it, when it appears sufficiently heavy, he places it upon his head. All the people singing and beating the drum and making much noise follow him as he carries it to his house. After they reach the village, the dish is put on

the ground, the priest goes in to his house and brings out an earthen pot that was used the previous year.

This pot is painted again with saffron, oil and rice. Then the earth in the bamboo platter is put into the pot and is covered over and a light fixed upon it.

Now the pot is taken again into the priest's house, a corner of which is newly washed with cowdung and painted afresh with saffron.

A kuncham (three seers) of rice is poured over the place and the pot is put upon it.

The next day all the bearers complain that their legs ache owing to the heaviness of the pot. This complaint is however groundless. The following day the priest comes round the village with the pot upon his head, the second priest opens the cover, then the villagers put cooked rice, potatoes and vegetables, &c., into it, while others put uncooked rice in another dish, which is being carried by another. This is repeated every successive day for about sixteen days. The bearers and Trombas eat the cooked rice. On the sixteenth day all the village people go to the temple. There they offer some rice and saffron to Gangapenu. The Naidu of the village has to offer a sheep. The blood of all these animals belongs to Gangapenu, the heads to the priests, and the remainder to the public, who share it amongst themselves.

When this ceremony is over the pot is taken to the nearest river or tank and is again washed. It is then taken to the house of the priest and is kept in its old place to serve the same purpose the following year.

The feast is held in the end of September or in the beginning of October at the time of Dipala Amawasia.

Sonnolipenu.

On the first day all the grown up girls go to the little temple of Sonnolipenu, clean the same, washing it with fresh cowdung and making the prescribed signs in chunam.

After this they all go back to their village and inform the Bezani that everything is ready.

The two Bezanis take a bamboo basket from house to house asking for food. Each house has to give some flowers and rice.

The Sisa and Tromba also follow. Each woman in the house takes some water and pours it upon the feet of the priest and puts a bottu (spot) of rice and saffron on the forehead of the priest and even on the baskets and drums.

After this the priest does the same to the woman of the house.

When in the morning of the day the grown up girls decorate the little temple, other visitors and children, in the meantime, engage themselves in building a little hut in the middle of the village. Subsequently rice and flowers are received. The two Bezanis go into the little hut and begin to sing and pray. As the song and prayer gradually become more and more excitedly repeating, the other people round the hut say that the Penu has taken possession of them.

Then the Bezani comes out of the house and begins to sing a hymn in which the villagers join. Then suddenly the Bezani ceases and all cease with her. Then she commences a hymn in which all the villagers

at once join. In this way they all follow their Bezanis out of the village crying and singing. Each of them carries a fowl or a goat or some pigeons into the little hut temple. The pigeons are presented to the Horupenu (the hill spirit) which comes to this feast.

Now begins the service in or before the little hut. A small light is placed before it and rice is poured around; then a goat and several fowls are slain. The heads of all the fowls are cooked in front of the hut and every one quits the place. The attendants receive a small fraction of it. The Bezani suddenly rises, takes the plate with rice with a light over her head and proceeds back to the village singing. All people follow her.

The Bezani carries the rice and light into the small hut in the middle of the village, and when she reappears outside all the people begin to sing without ceasing, and dancing during the whole night. This is repeated during seven successive nights. On the eighth day all the villagers prepare a pot full of small cakes. When the Bezani makes her round again through the village, each house has to give her four of these cakes, after which she makes a bottu on their foreheads.

The Bezani now takes the full basket and enters again the little village temple and puts the basket into it and begins to pray thus :—

O Mother, Sonnolipenu! look here upon the full basket: You have now enough food to eat. We made you a sumptuous feast, grant us now good crops, excellent seeds, &c. Then she rises again and all go to the hut outside of the village.

Each one has to bring a living creature along with him. A fowl or even an egg is sufficient. The whole village now offers a goat.

The priests receive the heads of all the slaughtered animals. The remaining flesh, eggs, and everything else that has been brought are put together into a big pot and cooked before the hut. All partake of this cooked meat. Then the priest speaks to the Penu: "Look here, O Mother, we have given you such a sumptuous, luxurious meal and celebrated a solemn observance; now please, graciously bless us all and bestow on us good and copious crops, prosperity and health. If you condescend to grant us our humble request, we assure you that we will prepare a grand feast next year again, otherwise we shall discontinue it for two or three years."

This feast occurs in the month of December, Karti-purnam.

Zākiripenu.

Outside of each Kond village there stands a small temple about 1½ feet square, built entirely of stone slabs. At sunset before the feast, one Tromba, one Dihera, one Sisa and two Bezanis, betake themselves to this place or temple. There they all five engage themselves in cooking some rice and preparing some fowl curry. Then they remove the stone slab which covers the entrance. The Tromba makes a bottu of saffron just in front of the entrance and places the dish containing rice and curry in front.

A cow and a pig are then led to the place, some of this rice and curry is put into their mouths and they are

then slaughtered, their throats being cut with a knife. A certain quantity of their blood is taken and given to Zakiri Linga, after which the flesh of the two animals is cooked up with different kinds of pulse.

The Sisa brings some leaves and places three of them at the left side of the bottu in front of the temple. The Tromba puts rice and curry upon them.

A little further away, about thirty or forty leaves more are placed on the ground and on them cooked meat with rice is placed.

Now the three priests Tromba, Sisa and Dihera begin to pray thus: " O Paramushela, Dada, Dharmu, Kaligu, Pattagu, Besihanna, Chitra, Utra, Asta, Tanassa, Rahuni (names of stars) give us from this day each thy gracious help that we may no more commit sin and that our fields may yield excellent crops bestowing upon us many measures of corn and great heaps of grain and let us not be low and mean.

Before this a man is sent out to collect the " sun-penny" from each house. Every one pays. Arak is purchased with this money. Some quantity of arak is poured over Zakiri and the remainder is drunk by the congregation.

After this is over the dance begins. It is generally restricted to unmarried boys and girls. A line of girls sit on the ground and opposite to them a row of boys. They rise when the dance commences. Each one entwines his left arm round the neck of his companion to the left and his right hand round the waist of the one to his right. First the line of boys moves towards the girls singing, " O girl ! I am a poor boy,

if you marry me what can I give you? I live on wild roots and herbs, bamboos and leaves. What can I give? I have no cloths nor fine dress. You have much money, but I have none. I am a poor boy living in the forests." Then these boys move back and the line of girls advance singing, "O boys, what can I give you? What can I give you, I am a poor girl and cannot give you anything. I live in the forests eating leaves and roots, you are rich, I am poor, I have no cloths nor fine dresses."

This dance continues the whole night or till the participators tire of it.

This Zakiri feast is held in the month of March.

Horupenu (Hill Spirit).

Nobody knows the whereabouts of this hill spirit. Offerings that are tendered in worship are held out to it in the following manner:—

All the inhabitants of a village assemble beside their fields, which adjoin the forest at the time when the crops are ripening.

The Bezanis, the Sisa, and Tromba, and Dihera, fast. Then the Bezanis begin to sing and pray, and after a little while they begin a forward and downward motion of their heads to show that the hill spirit has possessed them. This spirit is supposed to have a head as big as a basket, to be very heavy and to have taken its seat upon the head of the Bezani. She begins now to shiver with cold and announces that the spirit has come.

She now starts a dance which lasts an hour. She receives seven grains of rice and swings her hand up and

down about fifty times, after which she lays down the grains. If one or more of these grains are lost, it shows that the spirit is dissatisfied with the people's offering. A new offering must be made—usually a pig, a sheep, a pigeon, or a fowl.

All these animals are now slain and some of their blood is sprinkled upon the fields as sacrifice to the spirit, after this the slaughtered animals are cooked and enjoyed by all. Some of the people make a vow to offer another fowl or something else in case their fields turn out fruitful and provide a good harvest. When this offering is presented, the meat is distributed to the coolies who help at harvest time.

Bāâlipenu.

In the beginning of February the two Bezanis resort to the nearest river and bring four baskets full of sand, in their belief that this sand is the spirit of the earth, called Ba'ali. In the middle of the village a small bower of green bushes is erected. In the little hut the Bezanis place the four baskets; in these they sow some grains of rice or any other corn.

For seven days the Bezanis pray inside of this hut. On the eighth day the little seedlings are taken out of the basket and are carried by the Bezanis from house to house and presented to their inhabitants. The villagers fasten them to hairs of their heads, where they remain for some time, after which they are taken out and thrown into the river. All the villagers now offer rice and flowers and proceed singing, whistling and beating the drum to the river. Here the feast begins;

sheep, fowls, etc., are killed and rice is cooked and all partake.

If any villagers are prevented from attending the feast, their relatives or friends reserve half of their own supply for them. No food may be taken home. This feast is held once in the year.

The Jātra Feast.

This feast is held on New Year's Day, which is called Kotha Amavasia and falls in April or May. It is sacred to Durga. Here and there, there are small gardens, about one to twenty villages. Among the trees of these gardens knives are hidden which represents Durga and are named Maridi. A big buffalo is tied before the Maridi.

A whistle by the Tromba is the sign for all people to hasten down with their knives, axes or spears, to attack the beast.

In former times, it was the invariable custom for all villagers to invite their relatives to this feast, and the sons-in-law of these viliagers had each to bring a rupee. These rupees were all thrust into the mouth of this poor beast which was forced to swallow them, and as each man was anxious afterwards to recover his money, they used to search for the same while the slaughtered animal was still living. The whole procedure was most inhuman and merciless. As the excitement increases, they sometimes inflict serious injuries on themselves. Some one may lose his arm or finger or even risk his life.

In several places the people tie up the animal to a pole or tree and take its life sooner and not so cruelly as

above stated. Even in insignificant localities a pig or a sheep is slain at this Jathra feast.

Omens.

(1) If, when one is on his way to call a doctor and he meets a snake on his way, he will not complete his errand, for, if he does, the belief is that the sick man will certainly die. The snake represents the stick upon which the dead man is to be carried away.

(2) Either parents or young man, before asking for a girl in marriage, will take three times three grains of rice and place them in three different lines, covering each line over with a little earthen pot. The next morning, if one of these lines is broken, the marriage will not take place.

(3) When people go to a village to ask for a girl in marriage, if they meet with any empty waterpots on their way, they say goodbye to such a marriage.

(4) If a hawk happens to rest on a house where there is one sick, death is the anticipated end.

(5) When a man goes out early in the morning, if he meets a childless woman or man, who is not addicted to smoking, he considers it an ill omen.

(6) When a person wishes to borrow some money and hears a parrot cries "chia, chia, chia," instead of "kudisa, kudisa, kudisa," he concludes definitely that he will be unsuccessful in his endeavour.

(7) Nobody should start on Saturday as Chenni will be against him, and similarly none should start on a

Monday, as this day is an evil day ; the other days are held auspicious.

(8) If people moving from one place to another come across a bear or a monkey, they value the omen as auspicious.

(9) If they dream of an elephant, it is auspicious: if they divulge the dream, it is inauspicious.

(10) If they dream of a tiger or a monkey, famine will light on them.

(11) Tuesdays and Thursdays are reckoned auspicious days for sowing.

(12) Seeds sown on Sundays will bring forth crops fair and in abundance, but they will be destitute of seeds.

(13) Huts must be erected on a field on a Friday. A little story explains the origin of this custom. There was once a man who wished to erect a hut in a field and asked the chenni what day would be auspicious. The priest told him to build it on a Thursday, and accordingly he did so. That very evening a tiger came to his house and asked him why he had built that hut on a Thursday ? He told him that he had erected it by the order of the priest. The tiger asked him to go into his village very quietly and find out if anybody was still awake. So, the man obeyed the tiger's orders, went into the village, and returning reported to the tiger that all were asleep except some one in the priest's house. While the man was in the village enquiring, the tiger had gone away but returned by the time the man came back and the tiger gave him a pig for his meal. The man was rejoiced at it, and while all was quiet and still in the village, the tiger went in, caught hold of

the priest and ate him up. Ever since these people build their huts on Friday only.

Obsequies.

If a Kond dies, the customs for all of them are generally the same except those for unweaned infants who are burned without any special ceremony. On all other occasions all the village people take part.

When a member of a village dies the whole village weeps. A small portion of rice with pappu is cooked and a little of it is put into the mouth of the deceased. The remaining rice is laid near his head. Saffron water is thrown over the body and the corpse is conveyed upon a bed or upon some branches to the place of cremation.

All meet of the whole village and even the food then being cooked must be thrown away and the water reserved in pots for home use must be poured out. The bariki of the village only is allowed to receive these eatables.

One man out of each house ought to accompany the corpse to the burial ground bringing with him his axe.

The whole property of the deceased, such as his raiments, his pots, rings, ornaments, and even the money which he possessed, is brought with him. The women who remain at home take all the pots and furniture of their houses to the nearest river and wash them.

When the bearers arrive at the burial ground, each one takes his axe and cuts some dry branches; upon these

branches, heaped together, the corpse is laid. The property of the deceased is placed near his head on the ground; sometimes the money is covered with a little earth. The bearers stand near the corpse and every one of them throws some leaves which he had plucked off a branch, upon the corpse uttering such words as " Your way is now at an end, and your fields turn into forests." Then come two of them, each with a fire brand of straw, one moves from the left to the right and the other from the right to the left, going three times round the corpse. Then one sets fire to the pyre at the head, while the other does so at the feet. After this all retire. " Don't look back," says one to the other, " his ghost will pursue you."

On their way back to the village one of the bearers takes a branch of thorns and lays it over the way and remain standing there. In his hand he holds a little dish made from a leaf and puts into it a small quantity of powdered mango bark which he mixes with water. Each of the bearers, as he passes him, takes a little of this preparation out of the leaf plate, smells it and throws the rest aside.

After this all villagers enter their village again and each one receives a cake, as soon as he enters his house, which his wife has prepared of *pallard* and water; he raises it to his mouth and then throws it behind him. Then he bathes and enters his house. Cooking now begins with fresh drawn water and cleaned pots. Nobody is allowed to do any work on this day. The third day after the death a feast is given to the bearers; a little pig and fowl with rice are cooked. The people who prepare this dinner must be very old men. When all are assembled,

the Bezani comes and begins to move her head up and down, feigning that the spirit of the dead has taken possession of her.

Weeping in a low voice she begins first to talk as if the deceased himself was speaking, as follows: "Do not weep about me; I am all well, I shall be born again through my brother, my uncle or sister with a different name and shall again live amongst you. Do not scold me." Then she makes a sign towards the little orphan children and calls them to herself and lays her hand upon their heads. "Weep not my darlings. Your uncle will arrange a marriage for you and your sister shall take thee into her house. Your brothers must not quarrel with one another, all must behave well. Give my cow to my sister and my fields to my brother, &c." In this way the Bezani makes known the will of the deceased. All relatives or the villagers act strictly according to her advice. After an year this ceremony is renewed on a grander scale and an ox or sheep is slain and the whole village partakes of the sumptuous repast. The Bezani appears again and repeats the wishes of the deceased. When the corpse is burned and everything is reduced to ashes, the ghasi, a very low caste man, goes to the burial place usually on the very day, if he happens to be living near the place, or if he be living at a distance, when he hears about the death of the deceased and he takes everything away that he finds near the corpse. He then proceeds to the village, shows the villagers the rings, chains, etc., of the deceased and asks them to buy them again. The Konds usually comply with his request and pay the full price for them again.

PART II.

SOME CUSTOMS OF THE KUVI KONDS.

SOME OF THE CUSTOMS OF THE KONDS.

Child Birth.

When a child is born, the mother goes with it outside and both take a bath and she rubs saffron over herself and the child's body

Then the relatives bring an handful of stones and put them in a pot of boiling water. Then they also put some flour into it and mix it well. When the soup is ready, the mother has to eat it spitting the stones out. It is the opinion of the people that young mothers should be so strong as to be able to digest even the juice of stones. The next day the mother takes her little child and climbs up the hill to her fields, going behind the workmen picking up grass and stones. If there be no work in the fields, the mother is allowed to stay at home.

On the very first day the child is born, all the hair on its head is shaved, leaving only a tuft of hair on the scalp. When the child is grown up, this is considered a sacred tuft, as it has never been cut off.

The people say that this is the hair that their father and mother have given them, and that their strength lies in this tuft, and that, if they would cut it off, their strength would vanish. It is a shame, some say, for them to cut it off and a blasphemy against their parents. On the eighth day the mother and the midwife are served with a good dinner and with four annas arrack, if convenient.

When the child begins to walk, they kill a pig and have a great feast: on that occasion the name of the child is given. One inhabitant of each house in the village generally takes part in this feast.

Marriage.

When a daughter is grown up the father asks her whether she has betrothed herself to any one. If she says, "yes," the father enquires who it is. On her mentioning the young man's name, he promptly forbids her to marry him, aspersing his moral character severely. On the daughter's refusing to obey her father's behest, he becomes very angry, and cursing his fate orders her to leave his house at once and tells her that he has disowned her. The girl tries to coax her father round, but he is obdurate, gives her a piece of cloth and a sack of grain and she is escorted to the village boundary by some of her village friends, some accompanying her to her father-in-law's house.

When the father-in-law observes the party arriving, he calls to all in the house and tells them of the daughter-in-law's arrival. He at once lights the lamp (even when it is daytime). Now comes the Bezani and goes to the girl and tells her to put her right leg first into the house. She is then taken quietly to the garret. There she puts her hand into a basket of grain, or, if there is none, into a pot of water. Then they both come down, the girl goes into the kitchen and pours the water off the cooked rice.

Then she goes into the house of her new relatives. The people, who have accompanied her, put down their walking sticks and bathe themselves with saffron water. The girl brings the hotwater and puts a piece of saffron near the water; then she rubs the backs of each one.

All visitors bring a copper coin.

After this, the dinner is served. When the dinner is over, the girl takes in her left hand a big country spoon full of water and a basin and goes to each one of the guests and each of them washes his mouth and his hands, she holding the basin before them.

The bridegroom is then made to sit upon the lap of his father-in-law or upon the lap of any elder, when the father-in-law is not alive, and the bride is seated upon the lap of the bridegroom. One of the bystanders now holds the hair of the bridegroom and of the bride together in his hands, and two pots of water are poured upon their hands by another. After this, both receive new cloths.

Then the bridegroom goes into the house and measures four measures of grain and the bride also does the same.

At night both occupy a separate room. For sometime, they keep quiet together, but after a while, the bridegroom cries out that she is refractory.

On this, the father calls all the young unmarried men who are in waiting, and they all rush into the room and assist the bridegroom with most barefaced effrontery to reduce her to subjection.

The next morning the whole feast is over and the young couple fall into the humdrum groove of every day life.

Marriage for a Boy.

Young men, who are anxious to marry, go to a village where their relatives are. When they reach the place, their motive is at once recognized. All the girls in the village raise a hue and cry announcing their advent.

The parents advise their daughters to go and welcome them. They at once obey and with great joy and delight embrace them and invite them to their houses.

The father at once orders a bed to be brought inside on which these young men and the parents of the girls take their seats. "Why have you come here"? the parents ask. "Your lands are rich and fertile, while ours are poor and sterile; your food consists of rice and meat, whereas we exist only upon roots and herbs. You possess gold and silver ornaments. We have only iron and brass ones."

To this the boys reply. "It is we who are poor while you are rich. It is we who feed on roots and grass, while you subsist on rice and meat. The springs on our lands are parched and dried, while yours contain a plentiful supply of water." While this conversation is proceeding, a good dinner is prepared, of which they partake. Courtesy demands that they accept similar hospitality from all the other houses of the village. The girls follow them striving with fair and soft words to wheedle some small coin from them. Such a present is regarded as a promise of marriage. At night all these young boys and girls assemble in one house. They pass the time in singing and talking to one another. Their intercourse during this time is as unrestrained as is consistent with an observance of chastity though it ranges far beyond the realms of modesty and propriety. Conversation with the

girl runs somewhat as follows. The boy says: "Why will you marry me? What comforts can you expect from me? I am poor; my parents are poor; and my country is poor. You are rich and have gold and silver. If I enter your house it will be disgraced." The girl replies to him in the same strain.

They spend the whole night in talking and singing. The next morning, after taking a bath, the boys leave the village; most of the girls escort them as far as the forest. Then one of them asks the girl of his choice if she would marry him. If she gives him her hand he takes off his ring and puts it on her finger and she fixes her necklace round his neck. This constitutes betrothal which must not be violated. In case of a widower, the custom is different. When a Kond widower wishes to re-marry, he persuades the wife of another man, to marry him. If she does so, a heavy fine of from rupees 10 to 100 is inflicted on them both. After payment of this amount she becomes the lawful wife of the other.

Illness.

When a Kond is taken ill, the Bezani comes to his house and begins to pray, to sing and soon works herself into the hysterical state which is recognized as being possessed by a spirit. She begins to swing her head to and fro from right to left, and then declares that the sick man had promised to Peramushesha before he was born that he would present him with an umbrella or in default, would present himself before him.

All the people who hear this, get very frightened and promise at once to bring the umbrella, and without delay

they make preparations for a feast. An umbrella is prepared, consisting of red, black, white and yellow threads, fixed round a little bamboo stick, and a small bower is also erected one and half foot in circumference into which a small mud idol is placed.

This little idol represents the sick man who delivers the umbrella to God. After this, fowls or a sheep are slain and the feast takes place. The same course is adopted when cholera, small-pox, and other contagious diseases appear.

The only difference on these occasions is, while they present an umbrella in the former, they offer two swords or a gun made of wood in the latter.

When those diseases start, many persons, but more especially young children, carry small bundles of firewood, while others carry little bamboo dishes containing rice and curry. A small bandy is constructed and taken to each infected house, when the owners thoroughly and carefully sweep their floors and remove the sweepings into this little cart. All the villagers follow it, while some of them drag it to a place outside the village. They throw this bandy, the firewood and dishes of curry and rice into a heap and slay several fowls there

The heads of the fowls are consigned to the heap. The spirit is then besought to quit the village without causing any further harm or injury to the inhabitants.

The flesh of the fowls is taken home and is used by each family in the preparation of its next meal.

Another course of procedure for a poor sick man is as follows. The Bezani takes seven grains of rice in her

hand and begins to swing her hand up and down about fifty times : after this she shows the grain to the people around her and ask them to count. If the full number of grains remains in her hand, she assures the bystanders that the sick man will be restored to health in a short time, and demands a piece of cloth and a fowl or a sheep from them.

If, however, one or more grains are lost, the patient's conditions pronounced to be dangerous, and therefore greater offering must be made to propitiate the evil spirits.

Erecting a New Village.

The Konds are nomadic in their habits. They do not like to remain long in one place. The unsatisfactory condition of the land usually necessitates their leaving it and settling down in some new places. Living as they do between the forests that cover the hills, each man selects a spot after testing the soil, he then clears it and burns up the clearings.

Before the rains set in on the first day of June each cultivator invites the whole village to help him in preparing the land. Each villager renders him help for one day receiving his food for the day from his employer and ½ an anna as his day's pay. The work commences at about 9 in the morning.

Some engage themselves in cooking raggy or some grain in big pots for all the labourers.

They all sit together at about 2 o'clock and partake of this meal that has been prepared. When the hills decrease in their fertility, some or perhaps all the villagers abandon the place and seek for another site. They like to select old forests, with big trees, as these are recognized to be the most fertile. They do not generally remain at the same place for more than five or six years. Those Konds however who are fortunate enough to possess nice fields on the plains may continue for a longer period if not for always. No other tribe is by nature so indolent and idle. If they do a good day's work, it is only under strict supervision. They could spend their lives very happily on their quiet beautiful hills, but they are all slaves to their different money lenders on the plains. After the cultivation of their fields has been attended to, they loll about in their houses or on their filthy verandahs playing with their babies.

When they have nothing to appease their hunger, a money-lender is ever ready to accommodate them with money.

As the hills abound in very many valuable products, the Konds might clear off their debts very easily, but, as they are very stupid and frightened of the Telugus, they can never be liberated and are never able to extricate themselves when they have once fallen into the money lender's hands. For instance, a ryot borrows a rupee from a certain money lender and promises to repay it at harvest time, which is five or six months off. During this intervening period the money lender calls upon him each month and the debtor is debited with the cost of his creditor's food for that day. If he cannot clear the debt by the appointed date, he is induced to borrow still more.

At harvest time the creditor visits the fields of his debtors and measures the grain, which he purchases at a very low price, using perhaps false measures. The interest is then calculated both on the money actually borrowed as well as on the amount debited as representing the cost of the creditor's food during his monthly visits. The poor ryot (Kond) by hard begging prevails on the creditor to supply him with grain for the coming year's sowing, and the creditor magnanimously consents to receive only the principal of the debt leaving the interest on it to be paid up next harvest time on the understanding that interest is chargeable thereon at the rate of one anna per mensem on each rupee. It is easy to understand that under these conditions, not only is the debt never cleared, but also increases steadily till the creditor is in a position to claim all that the poor debtor possesses. The debtor ultimately becomes the creditor's slave.

He becomes so afraid of offending his creditor that he presents him with fowls and vegetables. This state of things continues till unable any longer to bear the creditor's oppression, he absconds bidding a sad farewell to his weeping wife and children. The interest on his debt to the sahoocar in course of time assumes alarming proportions, but there is no chance of its ever being recovered. In course of time it is written off as a bad debt.

When a Kond wishes to select another locality, he chooses what appears to be a place likely to meet his requirements.

He takes nine grains of rice and lays them in three lines on the selected spot, covering them with a small earthen dish plastered over with cowdung and

earth. The first three grains are for the spirit of the soil, the second line for Paramashesa and the third line for himself.

On the following day if one of these three lines is deflected, which may easily have been done by ants, he understands thereby that the objection to his settling down there is attributable to the spirit of the soil, Paramashesa or his own family. If the Kond is really anxious to remain in this place, he applies this test several times until it is successful. The site having been decided, the Dihera or the astrologer ascertains by the stars which will be an auspicious day, and on that day a pillar of the future house is raised and its upper portion is painted with saffron. He binds to it a tuft of grass and worshipping it entreats the blessings and help of Paramashesa and the spirits of the earth on his new house.

The Dihera is again asked to state when the house is to be built and to be completed. After it has been constructed, some unleavened raggy is cooked and placed upon a leaf before each pillar of the house. The owner worships the pillars again; then, the children come and eat this raggy, after which the first cooking takes place inside.

Jurisdiction.

If any person is charged with a heinous crime, the complainant reports the case to the village headman who summons the Tromba, Sisa, Dihera, the Bariki and the Salana, all of whom constitute the tribunal or Court of Justice.

If the accused confesses his crime a fine is inflicted with which they purchase either a cow or an ox and a certain quantity of arrack. A good dinner is prepared and the whole village enjoys it.

If the accused denies the charge, the tribunal exacts from him an oath in the undermentioned manner. A pot is filled with cowdung and water and is put over the fire and a small coin is slipped into the pot when its contents are boiling. The accused then stands before the pot and repeats these words, "I worship thee, O Paramashesa, and the Dati," then touching the earth with his hands, he says, "I have committed no fault; thou art my witness. If I really am guilty, may the skin of my hand be burnt." With these words he plunges his hand into the boiling cowdung and takes out the coin, placing it on the ground.

Now-a-days if any innocent persons venture to stand this test and dare to immerse their hands in boiling water, they of course suffer. It is, however, useless to argue that this custom is cruel, as the Konds have implicit faith in it as being an infallible truth finder.

Village Government.

Each village has one headman whose name is Hauta or as others call him Naidu. All quarrels and disputes are laid before him. Even domestic affairs are brought to his notice as he is regarded as the father of all the villagers. If there be a quarrel in a family, the husband goes to his Hauta and gives him all particulars. The Hauta sends for complainant's wife, and after admonishing her fines her a rupee. The husband of

course has to sustain this loss. Should another man recognize the absurdity of the complainant having to pay the defendant's debt, the complainant replies, "Why should not I pay? Do you think that our village approve of such a quarrel?" There comes another woman who is ill-treated by her husband and complains against him. No sooner does the husband hear of this, then he buys a bottle of arrack and calls on the Hauta at once with it under his arm, feeling pretty certain that he has anticipated his sentence. When a son disobeys his father, at first the father exercises his own authority, but if the boy becomes persistently disobedient, the father goes to the Bariki of the village and telling him of his sorrow and vexation gives him one or two annas and asks him to report the matter to the Hauta. The Hauta then sends for the boy and remonstrates with him warning him not to be disobedient any more, and, after giving him any amount of good advice, orders him to bring him about four annas worth of arrack. The boy very much dejected and covered with shame returns to his father and asks him why he told the Hauta about his misconduct. He then asks the father for four annas to buy the arrack. The father refuses to give it to him, whereupon the boy tells him that he must in that case dispose of his axe or knife to realize the required amount. At last the father pays the money. The boy goes to the next shop and bringing the arrack in a gourd, appears again before the Hauta, who by now has been joined by the Tromba, Sisa and Dihera.

The Hauta receives the pumpkin with arrack in his hand and says, "From this day may you be obedient to and happy with your father, following whatever

directions he gives you," at each word he dips his fingers into the arrack and sprinkles some drops over him The others act in the same manner. At last they all consume it and admonish the boy to be good and behave well in future, or they will be compelled to fine him an ox. If any theft, or crime, such as robbery, occurs in the village and the sufferer makes his loss known, he is fined up to four rupees if he cannot prove who committed the crime. On this account, it has become a custom among the Konds not to divulge any loss that any of them suffers. "Don't let it be known. The rest will also be taken" is a proverb among the Konds.

Murder of Babies.

It was a very general custom among the Konds to kill their little babies when they suspected that any harm might befall their community from the birth of the infant.

On the birth of the child, its father goes direct to the Dihera and asks him to cast its horoscope. The Dihera requests to know the correct hour of its birth. With eyes cast down, as if he were absorbed in deep contemplation, and then looking up to the sky, as if he were contemplating the movements of the stars, he begins his utterance "A danger awaits the father from a tiger in a forest, a snake may bite its mother, his sister may fall from a hill." On hearing this, the poor father returns home, and in great sorrow and vexation of spirit, takes the child, while the mother and others are crying bitterly, digs a pit and, laying the child in it wrapped in a white cloth, covers it with earth.

This was the invariable custom among the Konds till recently. Several people still living have witnessed this inhuman custom with their own eyes. It is the opinion of many that this cruel custom is still prevalent in some remote villages among the hills, notwithstanding the vigilance of the British Government.

Kuvi Songs

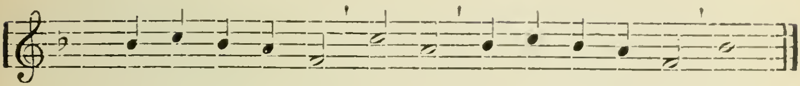
The Kuvi loves songs at all times, and at all places; it may be at bright midday or in the dark of the night, outside on their fields sitting upon some broken tree or in their houses. The common instruments are especially two, a self-made fiddle and bow and a self-made flute. Besides these they have different kinds of drums, but these are mostly only used on their festival days, whilst the fiddle and especially the flute may be heard daily near these villages.

The Kuvi Kond has a number of different tunes but all suffer under the same defect, which is shortness. There is really only one line of tune for each hymn. This will be repeated ten to fifty times, when the head singer suddenly changes the tune and begins with another one, in which all accord unanimously. As far as the shortness of tunes is concerned, the Kuvi lyrics will find it rather a hard task to force its way into more civilised or into Christian assemblies.

Anyhow I have tried to give to my Kuvi Christians some hymns in their own language and with their own melodies.

To give a small introduction into these lyrics, some of these tunes may follow :—

No. 1. నాను రాహాటిమయి   రాగం : దూడి రూడిసె.



1. నాను రాహాటి మయి   యేసు తోసె సి, హే!
2. యేసు హాతెసి మెహ్ంఅ   నంగె రక్షంణ, హే!
3. నీ ఎటి అజ్జి హచ్చె.   బ్లాయు వా తెకో; హే!
4. యేసు కానతీ కాఅ   పేన్క పెర్హిపీ, హే!
5. యేసు మచ్చిహె ఏని   దోహు హిల్లె ఎ, హే!

No. 2. పరము శేలతీ రక్షణహీయము. రాగం : ఉసూరు నూత

1. పర ము శేలతీ
రక్షణ హీయము } నాపాప ముకహల్లె హెక్షమింపము,
కర్తఅహీ.

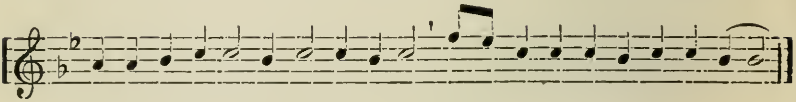
2. నంగెఎ యేసుఎ
కస్సతి హీ త్రెసి } నాదోహుకోస్రోమి నాయేసుహాతెసి,
జీవుకిహా.

3. మాన్నత వాంగితె
యేసు ని క స్సె ఎ } నాశిక్షపాటిహీ డొండో అతెసి, వా
హుఅ హీ.

4. నిన్నఅ యేసుతి
హారె జో హెుర్క్యు } నానెహీ జీవుతుల్లె జీవునెయుని, యేసు
తిహే.

5. నాజీవు ఓంటెఎ
బ్లాయుతి హీయము } నీ ఇష్టోమి లెహెఎ తాకీయము మా
బాతి, హే.

No. 3. నా టొట్టొత యేసుఎ మచ్చిహె   రాగం: కడహాబుదుత.



1. నా టొట్టొత యేసుఎ మచ్చిహె నంగేనై అజ్జి హీల్లెఎ.
2. నా తంజియు ఎచెల్వ క్రిస్తివా సయోామినంగె వానె,
హే.
3. నా యేసుఎ నాజీవ్ర క్రైఎ బత్కాలి హీని ఆబెఎ.
4. నా లీ కి సమేమిత ఈవసి రాహోతి వెంటెహీనెసి.
5. నా జీవ్ర కి అందేరి ఆయలిప నాయేసు నంగె ఉజెడి.
6. నా హా కి సమేమిత యేసుఎ ఏపూరు నంగె హీనెసి.
7. నా టొట్టొత యేసుఎ మచ్చిహె నంగేనై అజ్జి హీల్లెఎ.

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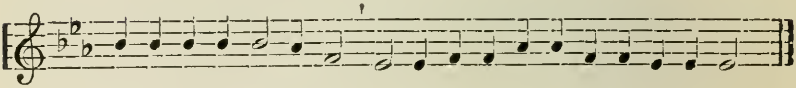

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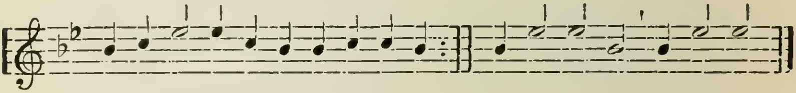

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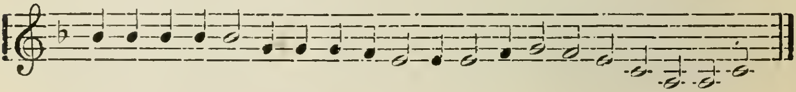

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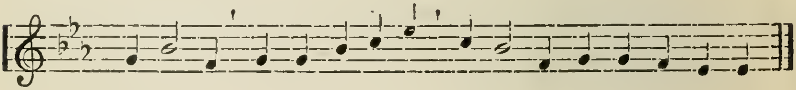

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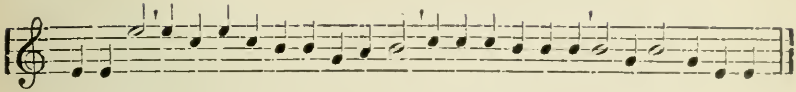

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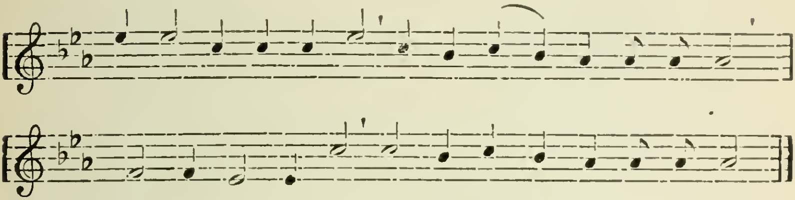

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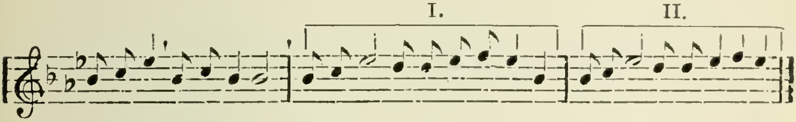

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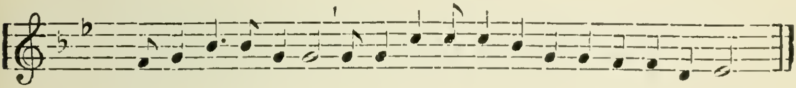

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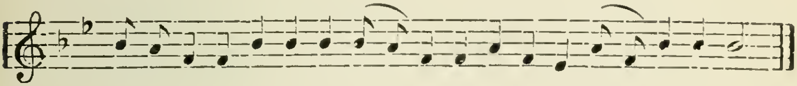

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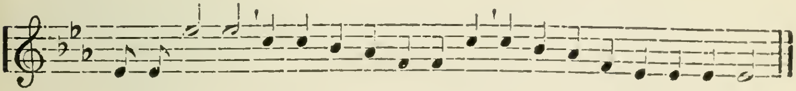

PART III.

FOLK-LORE.

I —The Fortunate Ghassi Boy.

In the old days there lived a great king. As he had no children he sent for the astrologers and asked them whether he would have any? They told him that God would bless him in a short time with a nice intelligent boy. The queen, however, gave birth to a girl. The king, though very much excited in mind at this, hid it from the knowledge of his subjects. Later on he announced that a son was born to him. He dressed his daughter in boy's clothes and sent her about. When this little girl was sent to school she made friendship with a Komati lad. As the time went on and they advanced in years, it happened that one day, while the boy and the girl were sitting in the class, the boy observed an unnatural development of her chest and suspected her sex. To learn the truth he proposed that, as a mark of their friendship for each other, they should exchange coats. The girl being unable to conceal the truth, disclosed the fact to him that she was really a girl disguised by her father. She proposed that it would be better for them to elope into a foreign land and live there happily together. He agreed, and it was arranged that they should meet the next night at a certain place and start from there for the place to which they had decided to go. This conversation, however, was overheard by a Ghassi boy who was close by. He decided to meet them at their rendezvous. When the boy was ready to start, his father was laid up with some illness and he was asked to go and fetch the doctor. Under these circumstances the Bania boy could not meet her at the appointed time and place. At the appointed time the girl went to the rendezvous and there met the Ghassi boy, whom she mistook for the Bania boy. She took him up

upon her horse and both rode together to their destination. The next morning she recognized him as a stranger; but somehow or another they both remained together for some time in a nice big garden. There the girl used to prepare daily such nourishing and savoury dishes that the Ghassi not only became strong and healthy, but also appeared to her more fair, handsome and attractive day by day. After a stay of one month they both went into a town which was inhabited by a king who, on their arrival, received them with great kindness and respect. They were accommodated in a magnificent building, which had twelve doors. A guard was set at each door to protect the girl while her Ghassi boy became the Rajah's Dewan. When the office closed the Dewan used to go to visit the rajah. On his way there was the house of a prostitute who, becoming very fond of him, used to invite him to visit her; but he, for a long time, refused, though he ultimately consented. In course of time, as the Dewan ingratiated himself in the rajah's favour, the rajah rewarded him with a valuable gold necklace. The Dewan highly delighted at this went to a river in the vicinity to take a bath. He placed the gold necklace near his clothes on the bank and took a nice bath and repaired to the house of the prostitute, forgetting the necklace he had left on the bank. He hastened back, found it, and then returned to the prostitute's house again. When he entered the dwelling he was told that she had gone to the fort. Hardly had he started to return to his own house, than he was bitten by a snake, fell down and nearly died just outside the house. After awhile the girl returned from the fort and found to her great sorrow that he was almost dead. As she was exceedingly fond of

him, she immediately applied some medicine to the wound and restored him to life, but fearing that he would leave her, she transformed him into a parrot by day, by smearing a certain powder over him. Only during the nights did he resume his human form.

The woman imprisoned the parrot in a cage with a ring to its leg; but one day it got out of its cage and flew over to its own house. The wife caught hold of it and caressed it lovingly. In doing so the powder the prostitute had applied to its body, was removed and the parrot resumed its human form again.

The people outside of the house saw this transformation and attempted to catch the boy, but he flew on to the roof and sprang into the house of a Komati who caught him with the expectation of a rich reward and placed him with his daughter, wrapping them both together in one sheet. In the meanwhile people began to rush into the Komati's house in order to find the man. The Komati allowed them to search the whole house till at last they came to the place where his daughter was lying on her bed. Nobody expected to find the young man under the same sheet and so went away. This young man afterwards married the daughter of the Komati, the prostitute who had transferred him into a parrot, and the daughter of the rajah, and the four lived together in contentment, peace and happiness for a long time.

II.—The Handsome Rajah's Son.

Once upon a time there lived a king who had a son who surpassed in beauty the sun and the moon. It was

therefore the great desire of the rajah to marry his son to a girl who was equally beautiful. The rajah sent his servants to all the kings who lived throughout the world to select a girl who was as beautiful as he ; but no such girl was found. The rajah's son, hopeless and despairing, set out into the forest armed with a splendid sword. After a day or two he met there a young man who was a carpenter. They exchanged glances and salutations, after which each asked the other who he was. Each pronounced himself to be a poor and helpless orphan. A great intimacy sprang up between them, and they proceeded further and further into the forest. After some days they met another young man and asked him who he was. He replied that he was poor and helpless and an orphan. Pitying him they received him into their society and went on further still. This third young man was a blacksmith. The three went into a town which was very large and inhabited by a rajah. The inhabitants of the town were in great perturbation of mind as a Rakshashi was hunting in the town and daily devouring one or two of the inhabitants. The rajah being very much frightened at its havock, offered a high reward to one who would kill this monster, and he further promised that he would give the victor half of his dominions and his daughter in marriage.

One night this Rakshasi entered into the city and went direct to the place where these three men were living. He was met by the prince, who killed the monster with his wonderful sword. Everyone in the town heard the welcome news and the next day was one of general rejoicing. The king sent for these three young men, praised the young prince's valour, made over half of his

dominion and delivered his daughter to him as promised. The young prince taking a dislike to the girl, gave her away with his share of the dominion to the carpenter, and he and the blacksmith left the country. Before he left the place, however, he gave a fresh green branch to the carpenter, telling him that, when this branch withered up he should call over and see the prince, as he would then be dead. After some days they reached a large town where a ferocious man-eating tiger was making great havoc among the inhabitants. The king of that place advertized a rich reward to any one that would kill this tiger, promising half of his dominion, and also his daughter in marriage. The young prince slew the monster and received half the kingdom and the princess as his reward, both of which he handed over to the blacksmith, presenting him at the same time with the branch of a tree and telling him that when the leaf withered he was to come over to him as he would be dead then. The next morning he left the country alone and entered a large forest. After a long journey, he came in sight of a big house. This was the abode of a fearful and powerful Rakshasi who had stolen a young girl, the daughter of a rajah residing in a distant country and had brought her to this residence of his, where he was rearing her. When the prince entered the house and saw this lovely young girl, he was enchanted with her beauty which he realized would be unrivalled anywhere. The girl greatly feared that he would be devoured by the Rakshasi immediately that monster saw him. She therefore applied some wondrous drug to his person by which he was immediately transformed into a stone, similarly she changed his horse into a broom and his sword into a bamboo.

When the Rakshasi returned home in the evening he smelt a human being and asked the girl who it was, but all to no purpose. Soon the Rakshasi fell asleep.

The next day when the Rakshasi left his house and went out the girl changed the prince into his natural form and then both enjoyed a pleasant conversation. She related to him her story of how the Rakshasi had stolen her from her father's house, when she was very young, and had brought her up for the last 10 years, and how she longed to return to her father, a famous king in a far off country.

On hearing all this, the prince pitied her condition, and asked her how he could possibly save her. The girl asked him to take the Rakshasi's life which was separate from his form. She said that there was a sea of milk, and on the other side of it there was a pair of pigeons, which if he caught and killed them, the Rakshasi would also die.

When he heard all this he immediately started off on his horse and rode over all the oceans and reached at last his destination, the sea of milk, and he crossed it to where these two pigeons were flying about. He caught them and brought them with him to the forest where this monster lived. As soon as the prince approached the abode of the monster, the latter advanced against him. The prince thereupon stunned the pigeons, whereupon the monster fell down stunned, and on his killing them the monster died. He then entered the dwelling in great delight to find the girl in a great state of anxiety on his behalf. As soon as she saw the prince, however, her heart was filled with joy. She began to question him as to his

journey and adventure. The prince related to her all that he had done and told her of the monster's death. Though she rejoiced very much at the news of his death, she was still doubtful about it. So, the prince asked her to wait for eight days and, if he did not return within that time, she might be certain of his death. So, they both waited together for eight days, and at the end of that time, the girl believed that he was actually dead. Realizing now that she was set at liberty, she married the prince who had saved her.

At this time the forest was visited by certain hunters who, when they saw the beautiful girl, went back and told their king about her. The king, anxious to see her, at once despatched some of his nobles to invite her to his kingdom with the object of marrying her. He also sent an old woman to enquire about the young man who lived with the girl. This woman one day appeared at the prince's mansion where she was asked to sweep the palace and the courtyard. The prince having on one occasion gone out hunting, this old woman seized the opportunity to ask the girl where the life of her husband was hidden. She told her that the prince's sword and the prince's life were one, and if the sword could be destroyed, the prince also would be dead at the same time.

When the prince returned home in the evening he took his supper and went to sleep laying his sword near his head. The old woman noiselessly came in, took the knife and running away with the same threw it into a big fire. When the knife was consumed the prince breathed his last. When he died the green branches which he had given to his friends began to wither and dry. As soon

as the two friends perceived this, they both started in haste to the place where the prince lay dead; they both set to work and forged a new sword out of various metals and laid it on the breast of the deceased prince, who returned to life. The two friends now constructed a balloon for the party, which was expected from the rajah, who had sent the old woman. After a few days two messengers arrived and asked the lady to come with them to the rajah's mansion, but she, advised by the prince's two friends, asked the messengers to bring the rajah's family to her palace or otherwise she would not follow them.

After a few days the whole royal party arrived at the house in the forest. When they saw the balloon they were all tempted to enter the car. As soon as they did so, the prince's two friends let the balloon loose. It flew away with all these people to a long distance and dropped into the sea where they all perished. The prince with the girl and his two friends with their wives returned in triumph to their own country, where they passed the remainder of their days in happiness and peace.

III.—The Unfortunate Ryots.

After the world was created its first king was Bharata who had a brother named Chitri. One year he sent for all his ryots and ordered them to give him the first part of their crops while they reserved the end for themselves. At harvest time all the ryots sat together and consulted how they were to meet their rajah's command.

They came to the conclusion that the rajah wanted the corn stalks which was the first part of their crops to appear, so they gave him the stalks and took the ends containing the ears for themselves. The next year the rajah determined not to be cheated a second time, and ordered the ryots to give him the ends, while they reserved the first part for themselves. Again they met in solemn conclave and agreed to meet the demands of their king by planting sugarcane, the ends of which at harvest time they sent him, retaining the stalks for themselves. One day the rajah visited their villages, but found the ryots very impolite ; they did not even rise up from the beds on which they were sitting when he approached.

The ryots had become so rich that they had made their doors, the beams of their houses, their ploughs and all other field implements of gold. When the king, angry at their insolent behaviour, questioned them about it, they replied that they would have respected and saluted him, had he heralded his approach by the tinkling of little bells fixed to his back. The rajah returned home very angry and told his brother Chitri of their insolence. His brother got very angry when he heard this and told him that it would be better to leave affairs in his hands at the time of writing the cowles, and to hand over the management of the country to him. To this the rajah consented. The next time when Chitri visited these villages, he sent for the Hauta, Tromba, Dihera and Sisa and asked them to execute their cowles. All obeyed his commands. He informed them that he had been appointed regent for that year and the cowles should be made in his name, to which all agreed. Chitri said that he would not want the beginning nor the end of the crop

as heretofore but a pumpkin from each house. All the ryots were exceedingly glad at this. They all said that this regent was a greater fool than his brother as they had never had such easy terms imposed on them before.

The regent ordered his friend Hanuman to prepare a big field on a hillside and to sow it with pumpkin seeds. The ryots also cultivated pumpkins, but their fields were unproductive, while Hanuman's were very fruitful. When the time for payment approached, the ryots became alarmed and apprehensive of trouble in paying their sists. Hearing that Hanuman's pumpkin garden tract had proved very productive, they were compelled to buy from him and went to his field, each one with two annas, the usual price of a pumpkin, in his pocket. When they arrived there, they found Hanuman sitting near a fire warming himself and asleep. Some of the ryots suggested to the Naidu that they should rob some and run off with them, but the Naidu warned them that Hanuman was very powerful and would destroy them all if they tried that game. They therefore woke him and very courteously requested him to sell them some pumpkins. He consented fixing the price of each at its weight in gold. The ryots repaired to their homes and brought their gold doors and ploughs, but these were insufficient to counterbalance the pumpkins. On Hanuman's demanding more gold, the ryots replied that the only gold that they had left was the pustai, which they had given their wives at marriage. Hanuman ordered them to bring them.

When these were placed in the balance an equipoise was effected. With heavy hearts the ryots received their pumpkins and paid them to the king. Then the

rajah said, as you ridiculed me, suggesting that I should put bells on my back to herald my approach, and as you did not rise from your seats to receive me when I came, therefore you are all cursed. From to-day you shall have to work like a tiger and to beg like a dog. This is the curse that the Konds are labouring under up to the present day.

IV.—The Goat.

A fox once reported to a tiger that there was a big goat in a certain pit and offered to show him the place. The tiger followed the fox. On the way they met a shivering bear which, when the tiger saw, he became terrified. When the bear observed this he asked him how he could venture to go to a place where a great king of beasts was dwelling? When the fox heard this, he told the tiger that the hole was inhabited only by a goat and that there was no king at all. If the tiger felt afraid, he suggested that the tiger should tie up the fox's head to his (the tiger's) feet and go into the hole.

The arrangement having been carried out, the tiger went nearer and nearer to the hole. Suddenly the goat appeared with its hideous beard and bristling hair. Very frightened the tiger instantly jumped aside and beat a rapid retreat. The fox's head being tied up to its feet, it was much injured, having been dragged over stones and through bushes. At last the rope snapped and the fox was released from its perilous condition. While running away, the tiger met a Mussalman who terribly frightened began to cry aloud. The tiger imagining that this man was the spy of the great king in the hole, ran faster than

ever. Ultimately the fox and the tiger met and went to the king of the tigers and related to him all that they had seen and suffered.

When the king of the tigers heard about the king in the hole, he got very angry and said that there could be no other king on earth beside himself and that he would go to the hole and kill him. While the fox and the king of the tigers were on their way, they came across a hare with its long ears. The fox saw it first and asked it what it was doing there. The hare said that it was sent by the great king to report any news.

The tiger ordered it to follow them. So the little timid thing did so. Soon they reached an old big well which was so deep that it was unfathomable. The hare looked into the well and saw its reflection in the water. It ran to the tiger and told him to look into the well and he would see the great king in the well. The tiger did so and mistook its own reflection in the water for the other king, and jumping into the well, was drowned. Then came the bear and the fox and saw the dead tiger in the well. They wanted to get him out and suggested that the hare should do so. The hare pleaded that his feet were too small to reach the water and suggested as an alternative measure that a rope should be tied to the tree which was growing close to the well, and that the bear and fox should go down by it into the well and bring the dead king of the tigers up again. This suggestion was carried out and both the fox and the bear descended into the well.

While they were down there the hare gnawed the rope, which broke and both bear and fox were drowned.

The hare then induced the goat to go into the well to be healed of its wounds.

The goat believed its words, went to the well, saw its image, fell into the well, and was drowned. While the hare was returning to its hole, a man attempted to kill him with stones. Then the hare said to the man, " You are trying to take my life, see what I have done to save yours," and showed him what it had done. He saw the four dead animals in the well, and becoming very frightened ran away. The hare being now quite out of danger, returned to his old place and lived there happily for many years.

V.—The Ungrateful Tiger.

Many years ago, in a part of the country which was much infested by tigers, there lived some people in a certain village who, in order to rid themselves of this nuisance, erected a tiger trap. Ere long a big ferocious tiger fell into the trap. The heavy stone they had laid upon the trap dropped on to him and pressed him down very much. For a whole month he had to remain in this trap without meat or drink and in great agony, but at the end of that time he was still alive. Awful were his cries and roars. At this time a poor Brahmin beggar had to pass that way. The tiger seeing him pass implored him for help out of the danger he was in.

The Brahmin, however, being very frightened at seeing the tiger, said, " O tiger, you have been starving for several days ; you are very hungry, if I help you to escape you may devour me on the spot, so I cannot assist you."

Thereupon the tiger replied, " How could I act towards you with such base ingratitude and thanklessness, if you were kind enough to extricate me from such imminent danger as I am now in ? Could I eat my benefactor and saviour ?" Then the foolish Brahmin believed its hypocritical speech and said, " All right. I shall help you, but before I do so I must exact an oath from you. With your foot touch the earth and then your head and swear that you will not eat me." Accordingly the tiger obeyed the Brahmin's instructions and the Brahmin helped him out of the dangerous trap.

When the tiger was set free he at once sprang upon the poor Brahmin to kill him. The Brahmin being alarmed said to him, " You have already promised me that you would not harm me. Is it right to break your promise and to kill me, your saviour? No, no, it is quite unjust, let us both submit our case for decision to three different judges."

The tiger consented to this proposal. They went first to a mango tree and laid their case before it for its verdict. On hearing their statements the mango tree said, " I see no injustice done by your killing the man. By doing so you will only be showing him similar justice to what he shows others. Take, for instance, my own individual case. Man takes shelter under my cool shade, he enjoys plentifully my delicious fruit ; he takes my leaves and dry branches for firewood, and in spite of all these favours he cuts me down root and branch without a spark of pity. I believe you are quite justified in killing him." On this the tiger attempted to kill him, but the poor Brahmin reminded him of the contract between them,

that they should receive the decision of two more judges, to which the tiger consented. They next proceeded to a cow and related to her the same story. The cow expressed herself as being disgusted with the character and disposition of men and acquainted the tiger with all the distress and affliction she received at their hands, in spite of her many good offices to man. "He drinks my milk," she said, "and makes me work at the plough in his fields all day long like a slave, and at last takes my life to eat me. He is an ungrateful and thankless wretch. Whatever injury you inflict on him is neither criminal nor wrong. I certainly vindicate your act and ask you to do away with him at once." While the tiger was again attempting to spring upon him and kill him, the poor Brahmin entreated him to stop, and listen to him, and said, "There is still another decision to be heard. Please grant it also."

The Brahmin very dejected and dispirited went along with the tiger, soon they both met a jackal. The Brahmin cried to it, "O my friend, kindly stop a moment and listen to me and give me your opinion on what I say. "This tiger was saved by me out of his trap and he promised not to take my life, but now is attempting to devour me. Is it just to kill his deliverer instead of showing him gratitude and thankfulness?" Then the jackal scratching itself behind its ear said, "What is the matter with you both, I do not understand you properly, speak out louder, I am hard of hearing as I have an ear-ache." The Brahmin and also the tiger re-narrated all the circumstances to him, but the jackal pretended that he could not understand them. They accordingly both approached nearer and explained to him as well as they could the

situation they were in. The jackal said that it was impossible to decide the case here. " There are discrepancies in both your statements, so I would like to go with you to the very place and see how it actually happened and then I shall pronounce my judgment."

So all three went back to the very place where the tiger had been entrapped. The Brahmin pointed out to the jackal the trap from which he had delivered the tiger. " No, I attach no importance to your statement," said the jackal, " let me see with my own eyes how each step occurred." Then the Brahmin lifted up the stone and the tiger continued his explanation of the case, but the jackal still failed to understand the situation and asked the tiger, " How did you creep into the trap and how did you bear the weight of the stone, let me see you do it over again."

Then the tiger crept under the stone and lay down just as before. No sooner had the tiger entered the trap, then the jackal let the stone drop and the tiger was again crushed down and roared for help. The jackal told the frightened Brahmin to hurry up with some more big heavy stones and throw them too on the tiger ; he did so and both went away. The joyful Brahmin thanked the jackal and asked him how he could repay his kindness. The jackal asked for a couple of nice fowls as his reward. The Brahmin complied with its request and they both departed to their respective homes.

VI.—The Mystical Kond.

Many years ago there lived a young man with his parents in a certain village on the hills. When the boy attained his majority, the father asked him to marry a nice girl in the village. But the boy was quite averse to a married life, as he pronounced marriage to be a sin, and moreover was unwilling to undergo all the troubles, disadvantages and crosses that usually attended it. After this all the elders in the village assembled together and did their utmost to persuade him, but all to no purpose. He in turn requested that he might be granted the purposed wedding expenses to expend it on his education. Receiving no help he ran away from home penniless, all he possessed was the little piece of cloth he was wearing. On his way he arrived at Salur, went into the river there and bathed and exposed his wet cloth to dry on the fence of a Brahmin's garden. When the Brahmin saw it, he at once called his wife and said, "Look at that cloth drying in the fence. We must receive the stranger to-day as our guest, therefore, prepare some food for him." She accordingly prepared a meal and served it to the young Kond who was very happy and delighted to receive such a nice dinner. The wife of the Brahmin was standing close to him observing his features and called the attention of her husband to them and remarked that his appearance was supernaturally beautiful. "He is a very handsome man," said she. "I should be very pleased to betroth our daughter to him." The Brahmin accordingly enquired of the young Kond who he was and whence he had come, who was his father, and where he was going to. Whereupon the boy answered, that he was the son of a great king, that he had been asked by his parents to

marry, and as he was unwilling to marry, he had run away without their knowledge.

The Brahmin was as elated on hearing the first portion of the lad's statement as he was dejected at hearing the last. He strongly advised him to get married and enjoy the pleasures of domestic life. The Brahmin further enquired whether he was able to support a family, and whether it was that he did not marry because he was afraid of his people. He told him plainly that it was a disgrace and shame to lead an unmarried life. The boy agreed with what he said, and further told him that his parents held the same opinion.

"I am not afraid of anybody," he added, "I shall gladly marry your daughter. Sit down and execute a document to that effect and I shall marry her." The Brahmin immediately complied with his request and prepared a document and handed it over to him.

Shortly after their agreement was made, the marriage was celebrated and after some time a son was born. As the husband was absent, his wife wrote him a letter giving him the news and asked him for his instructions. The husband wrote to her in reply thus: "Dear wife, please bring the child at once." Thereupon she set out in person to meet him, taking her child with her. When they met, the father sent for a barber and ordered him to get a rod. He then sent for a washerman with a spade and bidding them follow him, led the way to the nearest river. On arriving there he told them to dig a grave and to bury the boy in it. The wretched mother stood on one side weeping. They obeyed, but when, after placing the child in the grave, the men were commencing

to fill it in, the little boy began to speak and addressed his father, "O father, you have with you three annas, this money is mine, you must return it to me before I die." The father paid him the three annas, on the receipt of which they boy breathed his last.

With sorrowful eyes the father turned to his dejected weeping wife and said, see now the sorrows, afflictions, and unhappiness connected with married life. I was all along averse to marriage, as I have already told you. Let us separate; consider me no longer your husband. The poor wife begged and entreated him to live with her and said, "It is the will of God that our first born has died. We can't resist the will of God and cannot alter it. In time our circumstances will be bettered and you will have a happy, comfortable family life in future." The husband yielded to her earnest pleadings and consented to live with her another year. God blessed them again with a fair little lad, and again the father sent for the washer-man and barber to be present with their iron stick and spade.

They all went with the child to the river to dig his grave there. After the hole was dug, the child was laid in it. When they were about to cover him to bury the child, the boy spoke as follows: "Do not take my life, let me live, I shall study for twelve years, then I shall be made the Dewan of Jeypore on a salary of 1,200 Rupees, and later on at Sankaramanam feast when we all play ball, a ball will strike me and I shall fall down dead."

Everything happened exactly as the child had predicted. He did become Dewan and was ultimately struck on the head by a ball and died. This sad heart-rending news was soon conveyed to his parents. Then the father

said to his wife and those surrounding him, "See the benefits and advantages of marriage. It results in intolerable troubles, pain and sorrow." So saying he left them all and went away to live an ascetic's life, his wife also followed him, leaving everything behind her and they both vanished.

VII.—The Cunning Kond Boy.

There was once a poor Kond woman who was sitting under the shade of a tree in a forest outside of her village. She had a pain in her eyes and was very short-sighted, indeed almost blind. While she was bemoaning her fate and weeping, a man told her that he had a very good medicine which, if she would apply, would soon restore her eye sight and relieve her of all trouble. While he was away fetching the medicine, there was an old blind tiger near by who overheard the conversation. He springing all on a sudden upon the poor old woman, threatened to devour her unless she promised to give him the promised eye-salve. "Help me," he added, "and I shall not only not kill you but shall also reward you with a fine fat full grown ox." The woman agreed and applied the medicine to the eyes of the tiger. The tiger greatly pleased, presented the old woman with the promised ox. The woman ran into her village delighted and related the whole story to the village folk. They all were very much surprised and were very anxious to see the ox that the tiger had given her. They all went to the place, and to their astonishment found the fat ox there. They forthwith killed and flayed it and exposed the skin to the sun to dry: the woman's little son was seated on the skin, while the villagers were cutting up the ox.

After a while the little boy tried to get up, but could not do so as the skin had dried on to him. Finally they all went away leaving him alone firmly fastened to the skin. The tiger returned and finding him sitting on the skin, asked him what he was doing there all alone. The boy told him, how the skin had stuck to him and nobody had helped to free him. When the tiger heard this, it became very angry and told the boy, that he would bring another ox, and when all the people had again gathered together to divide the meat he would frighten them. So the tiger went back and returned again with a big ox. The boy highly pleased, sent and called all the villagers who came running at once and began to cut the ox to pieces as they had done on the previous occasion, getting the boy meanwhile to sit on the fresh skin. Then all on a sudden the tiger bounded on to the scene with a mighty roar. Very much frightened all the people ran away as fast as they could and the tiger gave the boy the whole of the flesh which he took home and distributed among his relations only. The boy had now a pair of nice skins which he was very anxious to sell, and for this purpose he started one day for Salur. On his way he came to a place which was infested with robbers. The boy, being afraid of them, climbed up a tree with his skins. Soon the thieves arrived and sat down just under the very tree, on which the boy was hiding himself. They commenced dividing their stolen property consisting of gold and costly articles. The thief who divided the treasure was accused by another that his distribution was unfair, all the stolen property was therefore again collected and a second thief began to apportion it, and another quarrel ensued. Thereupon their leader, becoming very much excited, said

that if the shares were really disproportionate and unjust, he hoped that Paramushesa would come down and destroy him with lightning. At that very moment the boy on the tree dropped his two skins upon the leader's head. They fell, making a great noise, which so greatly frightened the thieves, that they left all their treasures and ran away as quickly as they could. The boy now got down off the tree and appropriating all the treasure himself, returned home. On arriving there he sent his mother to his uncle's house, to borrow his measure, to calculate his wealth. The uncle, curious to learn what the boy wanted to measure, stuck some wax at the bottom of the measure and gave it to the old woman. The boy measured his money and returned the measure to his uncle. On examining it, he found that some rupees had stuck to the bottom of his measure, and his curiosity was roused to find out how his nephew had accumulated such wealth. He accordingly went over to his house and enquired of him, how he had earned it all.

The boy told him that he had realized the money by selling the skins at Salur. "Go there," said the boy, "and sell the hide piece by piece to the Brahmins and you will certainly realize an immense quantity of gold." When this news reached the ears of the inhabitants of the village, they all began to kill their cows and oxen, took the skins and started to Salur to sell them. They went directly to the Salur Brahmins, who were very much alarmed as they cried, "Buy cow skins; buy cow skins!" All the Brahmins of the town assembled drove them out of their streets. The villagers returned home very angry and decided on burning down the boy's house the following night. The boy hearing this bid his brother secure

the money effectually and also hang up four pumpkins, one in each corner of the house, so, that when they burst by the heat of the flames, the incendiaries would be under the belief, that it was the bursting of their heads at cremation. The following night the house was set on fire and the villagers hearing the bursting of the pumpkins concluded that both mother and son were dead. The next morning the boy collected what charcoal he could find from the ruins of his house, put them in a bag, which he placed on a bullock and left the village.

On the road he found a large number of Pitari bullocks, that were carrying sacks on their backs. He drove his bullock into the drove and watching his opportunity drove off one of the Pitari's bullocks in its place. When he found himself once again alone in the jungle, he examined the bullock's load and was delighted to find that it consisted of rupees, gold, and many valuable articles. Greatly pleased, he returned with it to his village and sent his mother again to his uncle to ask for his measure. The uncle, adopting the same procedure as before, let him have it. Discovering that it had again been used to measure money, he went over to his nephew and asked him, how he had come to such wealth. The boy told him that he had been to Vizagapatam with a load of charcoal that he had collected from the charred remains of his late home, and that the inhabitants bought it from him at a fabulous price. When the uncle told the villagers this, they all set fire to their houses, collected the charcoal and carried it to Vizagapatam for sale.

Their continued cries of " Charcoal ? Charcoal"? disturbed the inhabitants so much that they drove them from the town. Greatly enraged at the boy's conduct, the

villagers resolved to kill him. After stitching him into a big sack, they first of all gave him a good sound beating and then threw him into the river. Floating down on its surface the bag ultimately drifted to the side of the stream adjoining the road. Here the boy lay in his bag and began bemoaning his fate. "Of what use to me is all my gold, silver and treasure?" A Mahomedan merchant, who was riding by accompanied by his very beautiful wife, hearing the boy's groans, asked him where the gold, he spoke of, lay. The boy replied, that he had it with him in his sack. The Mahomedan forthwith cut open the sack, and the boy was released.

Again the Mahomedan asked him where the gold was? The boy told him to go into the bag and take it out. Anxious to get the gold the Mahomedan crept into the bag, which the boy quickly closed and tied up with a strong rope and threw it into the water. As soon as he had finished this, he took the Mahomedan's wife and rode off with her into his village. His uncles and several others were very surprised at his reappearance with this fair creature and questioned him about his possession of her and of the horses.

The boy told them that in the deep hole, where they had thrown him, there were many girls and horses whose beauty surpassed that of the one, he had brought with him and that he had brought only this one girl and two horses.

His statement encourged many of them to go there and suffer themselves to undergo the same treatment, he had survived, but alas! the denouncement was not equally satisfactory.

VIII.—Paramushesa and the Poor Widow.

Once there lived an old widow in a certain village. All the rich people despised her and denied her any help.

She lived in an obscure hut with her little son. One day, owing to a heavy fall of rain, her hut leaked very much. She made a little fire in the corner and sat near it.

God pitied this poor widow and came down from heaven in the disguise of an old man, trembling and shivering with cold. He asked all the people in the village to let him warm himself near their fire. But every one flatly refused. At last he resorted to the hut of this old widow. She immediately received him into her hut showing him every respect, and seated him near the fire. Then the old man changed her hut into a splendid tiled house, after which he suddently disappeared.

IX. Paramushesa and the Wicked People.

There existed once a small village which was known for the wickedness of its inhabitants.

One day Paramushesa visited this place in the disguise of a very old man covered with wounds, and trembling with fever and cold. He went to each house asking the residents for help, but they all looked down upon him and ordered him away. In his rounds he called on an old woman, and sought her help. She received him into her house and bathed his feet with hot water and seated him upon her bed. Then the man told her, that as this village was so notorious for its wickedness, its inhabitants would be destroyed and, that she alone would be

saved. He told her to go to different houses and borrow what money and valuables she could and bring them to him. The old woman replied that she was so very old that nobody would help her. But the old man insisted that she should obey him.

She accordingly obeyed his behest and, going round the village begging, returned with a big bundle full of things. Then the old man warned her to quit the house at once as the whole village was about to be annihilated. The woman immediately obeyed his command. A fall of rain, unprecedented in magnitude, descended and inundated the whole village, drowning its inhabitants.

X.—The Three Fairies.

There lived once a king and a poor widow in a certain village. She had a son, who one day went to a river for a bath. The water was very high, as it had rained very much. To his great delight he found some chittigi paggata flowers, which came sailing toward him down the stream. He collected a few of them and decked his head with them; after his bath, he went to the court of the rajah. The rajah very much astonished asked him, where he had obtained the flowers from. The boy replied, that he had found them in the river, but that he did not know whence they came. On receiving this reply the rajah threatened him, that unless he furnished him with some more of these flowers, he would be certainly beheaded.

On hearing this, the boy became terribly afraid, returned home and became utterly dispirited. His mother asked him, why he was so sad and dejected and had refused his food. The boy acquainted her with

the rajah's ruling that in case he did not procure some more of the same kind of flowers, his head would be cut off. His mother directed him to eat his meal first and then go direct to the riverside taking along with him a couple of days' food. "When you reach the place," she said, "you will be encountered by three Rakshasas, who will endeavour to devour you. Do not be afraid, but courageously advancing towards them address them by the term, "Uncle," and tell them your story, then you will find that they will take pity on you and will extricate you from your present dilemma." The boy accordingly made up his mind and started off towards the river. There he met a Rakshasi who advanced to devour him, but on being addressed as "Uncle" changed his intention and instead asked him gently what had him brought there.

The boy told him that the rajah wanted chittigi paggata flowers and so he had come to ask the Rakshasi's permission to gather them.

The Rakshasi replied, that he had never even heard the name of those flowers, and that, if the boy would go to the Rakshasi's brother, he might obtain some clue as to their whereabouts. The brother, however, could not assist him in the matter. Thereupon he proceeded to the place where the third Rakshasi resided. There he was informed that there was a large tank in the east, where three fairies resorted daily to bathe, leaving their clothes on its bank. The Rakshasi instructed him to go there and run away with their clothes; when doing so, he would find that they would call on him to return their clothes or they would order him to look back. He was forbidden to obey either of the two orders. The boy accordingly called at the place and ran off with their clothes: though

they called to him not to do so, he would not listen, but unfortunately, at an unguarded moment, he looked back, whereupon he dropped dead.

The Rakshasi came to him, covered him with plantain leaves and restored him to life again. Repeatedly did the fairies call to him, but he took no notice of the call and ran away to the Rakshasi's house. The fairies pursued him there and demanded a return of their clothes, but he unblushingly denied ever having taken them.

Then the fairies offered him their little sister in marriage if he would return their clothes.

The boy consented, whereupon they immediately raised a pandal, and when the bridegroom plunged his hand into the waterpot, the bride began to laugh, that from her mouth the Chittigi paggati flowers began to drop into the water. The boy received the flowers and asked his wife to follow him to his native place. The fairies refused to send their sister along with him, but they gave him a zither and told him that, when he wanted them, he was to play upon it and they would at once present themselves.

Having received a carriage from the third Rakshasi, the boy started off to go and visit the second Rakshasi who presented him with a rope and stick. After he reached his house, he began to play upon the zither. The three fairies at once appeared. When the servants of the rajah heard the music and saw the beautiful fairies they hurried to their rajah and informed him of the facts. The rajah sent for the boy and accepted from him the flowers. Being very much captivated by the beauty of the fairies, he concerted a plan to kill the boy, by ordering him to procure some lion's milk.

The boy went home directly and sought the assistance of the three fairies who summoned all the lions to be present and handed them all over to the boy and told him to call upon the rajah in company with them. As soon as he entered the rajah's capital, these lions caused great havock in the town.

Hearing this, the rajah became very much alarmed and, more than ever, determined to kill him, ordered him to fetch him a poisonous serpent.

He immediately called on the fairies for their aid and they, without delay, created an innumerable number of virulently poisonous snakes, which he took to the rajah, and left them in the town.

Many of the inhabitants of the town were bitten and died. Believing that a ferocious lion would kill the boy, the rajah commanded him to capture one alive for him. The boy by the same aid obtained one and brought him to the rajah, after it had killed many of the inhabitants on its way to the place, creating thereby a great uproar in the town. The rajah finally determined to kill him by throwing him into a dark pit. After the boy had returned home one of the rajah's servants came to say that the rajah had sent for him.

The fairies gave him a mouse and instructed him to keep it with him whereever he went. On his presenting himself before the king, he was thrown into a pit, but the mouse dug an outlet for him, by which he escaped and returned home. The rajah now much chagrined and disappointed decided to send him to another king who was instructed beforehand to kill him as soon as he arrived. In obedience to the rajah's behest the boy started on his way to the other king, taking along with him the rope and

the stick that had been given him by the Rakshasi. On his arrival the king seized him, upon which the boy rubbed his rope and stick. The rope at once twisted itself around the rajah's legs and arms, while the stick began to give him an unmerciful beating. The king in his agony promised the boy to give him his kingdom, if he would liberate him from the torture of the rope and the merciless blows of the stick. The boy immediately complied and freed him. The rajah kept his promise, whereupon the boy went home and returning with his wife lived happily in his new kingdom for a long time.

XI.—The Big Tank and Laomaodu.

There was once a Naidu who was very rich and good, but he had no children. The husband and wife were on one occasion bemoaning their lot and wondering what they would do with their riches and how their family name could be perpetuated in the world. They decided on having a tank dug. The next morning the Naidu sent for the bariki and bade him gather all the inhabitants of the village to help him in digging the tank and he promised to pay his coolies four annas hire a day.

All the inhabitants came with their oxen, pickaxes and spades and dug a tank that measured twenty-four miles in length and the same in breadth.

It took three years to complete it. After the work was done, a little hole was discovered in it, which could not be filled in. The Naidu himself went to the place and inspected the work. While walking along the bank, he became drowsy and fell asleep. He then dreamed a dream, in which three little girls came to him, touched

him and told him that, unless he offered up his wife in sacrifice, the bank would not stand.

The Naidu went home and told his wife his dream. The wife replied, "What am I? We constructed the tank that the name of our house might be perpetuated. What can give me more pleasure, than to do anything that will contribute towards the success of our undertaking." She accordingly dressed in her best clothes and decorated her neck and head with flowers and with a mark on her forehead proceeded to the tank. While she was praying, the bystanders rapidly piled basketfuls of earth over her and thus buried her.

No sooner had she been buried then the banks of the tank settled down and the leakage stopped. The villagers returned home delighted. After all had returned home, five women came to the tank cleaning their teeth on their way. During this process they spat a great deal. When they arrived at the tank and stooped down to wash their faces, the buried spirit spoke as follows: "You are great sinners; you have polluted the whole road, that you have passed over, with your spitting. You must therefore turn all that polluted ground into a tank, if you wish to expiate your sin.

At that time there lived a rajah, who used to lend money on the understanding that the debt should be liquidated at Lakkapur, when it could not be returned in this world. These five women borrowed from him five thousand rupees. The rajah requested them to repay it only in Lakkapur. These five women returned home with depressed spirits. While they were going, they came across a field, which was planted with brinjals There they saw the head of an ox, which was stuck on a

stick. This head looked at them with an amused expression. These women were quite astounded at this and asked the head to explain itself. The head replied, "You are very thoughtless creatures. Why have you borrowed such a large sum? It is quite impossible to repay it. Look at my state, I was paid only nine rupees, and for this amount I had to plough their fields all my life. I had to work both day and night, and at last they killed me for my flesh, and even now after death it is my fate to be impaled on this stick to act as a scarecrow. Such being the case, how daring is it of you to borrow five thousand rupee! You are certainly destined to go into everlasting perdition."

These three women were terribly afraid at these words and went back to the rajah and begged him to accept the money back as they despaired of ever being able to repay it even in heaven. The rajah became highly irritated at this and sent them away with the money, telling them that they must repay it in heaven. He bid them either to throw it into a river or spend it on charitable purposes, but he would not accept it. These five women returned home sad and dejected, and there met a shepherd's lad, who was a dwarf. He shouted out, "Sisters, sisters, why are you so sad?" The five women surprised went to him and told him their story. They attributed their misfortune to having started at an inauspicious hour. On hearing, what they had to say, the boy encouraged them by bidding them not to be afraid, but to be courageous. The advice he gave them was that they should get a tank dug for the five thousand rupees and then erect a pillar in the middle, on which they should engrave the rajah's name. He warned them not to appropriate to themselves a single pie out of the five thou-

sand rupees, but that they should proclaim throughout the length and breadth of the country, that the whole concern belonged to the rajah only and to no one else. "Thus will you absolve from the guilt of borrowing this debt. In your next birth," the boy said, "you will be born queens of the earth." Thereupon one of these women asked him, how he knew this. The boy said, that he had discovered it from the expression of their countenances. They accordingly dug a very large tank and published the news as they had been instructed all over the earth. These five women departed this life after a year and were reborn again in Lanka, whose king married them. He ordered five strong forts to be built for them.

They all lived together happily till the king of another country questioned the King of Lanka's title to the throne and declared war.

Then the King of Lanka sent his son to heaven, that he might cause to fall therefrom a heavy rain of fire on the new king's forces, which were thus destroyed. The new king suffered a great defeat and retreated.

He, however, again collected a great and powerful force and returned to the fight. A sanguinary battle took place between them, which lasted for a period of twelve years. The King of Lanka was reputed to be so powerful, that he could at one time seize hundreds of his enemies and devour them. Some of those, he swallowed, however, used to effect their escape through the pores of his skin, while others found their liberty through his ears and nostrils. The King of Lanka was ultimately killed and the invader's flag of victory waved over the country for six months. The conquering army went all over the country ravaging the country and ravishing the women

of Lanka, who were remarkably beautiful and prolific. At that time children were conceived in as many hours as it now takes months; the population, therefore, increased very rapidly.

The land and houses in Lanka were exceedingly magnificent. Most of them were artistically roofed with paddy and other cereals and the inside of the houses were overlaid with gold. After six months the king decided to return home and ordered his armies to follow him. He then discovered that his army was enormously increased owing to the new wives that the soldiers had taken and the children that had been born to them.

These wives and children were prohibited from following the army. But they represented their case so strongly, that the king, recognizing that they were his own soldiers who were to blame, took compassion on the poor women and built them a large town named Sheva, where they could stay and possess the surrounding country, promising them his protection. Then the king returned home with all his army leaving these women and children in Lanka, where they all lived happily and undisturbed.

After the king had returned to his country, his servants frightened him, saying that the King of Lanka's elder brother named Laomaodu, who was a most formidable enemy, was still alive in Lanka. The king therefore decided on returning to Lanka and removing this dreaded rival. A new difficulty now presented itself owing to the water of the intervening sea, which was said to possess strong petrifying property. To prove the truth of this, the king dipped the tip of his little finger into it, with the result that it at once was petrified. He ampu-

tated the part affected. Then came a Vanar, who placed his hands on the shores of Lanka, while his feet rested on the Indian shore. The whole army marched across over his back, which became very sore, but the king healed it and it ultimately turned into gold.

When all his soldiers had crossed the sea, they pitched their tents in Laomaodu's kingdom. At this time Laomaodu was attended by his barbers, who were shampooing his head by hammering it with twelve big hammers. The king was reputed to be so strong, that on one occasion he took seven elephants and battered them together till they died. A messenger was sent by the invading monarch to tell him, that he had come to invade his (Laomaodu's) country, but Laomaodu's faculty of comprehension was so dull that he failed to grasp the purport of the message and did not even lift his drooping head to hear it, whereupon the messenger, enraged at his indifference, struck him on the head with one of the hammers.

This act recalled the king's consciousness so much that he with a puff of his breath blew the messenger away to his own village a hundred miles away.

The messenger returned to his king and told him what had occurred.

The king gave him a large sack full of rupees and bade him proceed to Laomaodu again and ask him to exchange the silver for gold, but Laomaodu declined.

The messenger then made a very sporting offer that all Laomaodu's gold should be weighed against the silver that the messenger had brought, and the king whose coin weighed the lighter, should hand over his dominion

to the other. In spite of Laomaodu's best efforts, his gold, even when added to that of his subjects, failed to outweigh the invader's silver.

Laomaodu then refused to abide by his agreement, and the next morning the war began and a sanguinary battle took place. All Vanarulu were slain on the battlefield and their king, the invader, was so severely wounded, that his body became thin and transparent. Laomaodu was also wounded, but whenever a drop of blood from one of his soldiers fell on the soil, innumerable new soldiers were born again. When Sita heard about the perilous state of her husband, the invading king, she told him, "that she would fire an arrow if her husband Ramaswami, the invading king, would lay his hand upon the arrow, when it was being discharged, and at the same time she would stretch out her tongue over Laomaodu's surroundings, so that the blood of all his soldiers would fall upon her tongue instead of on the ground as heretofore and then no more new soldiers would be created. It had been decreed of God that Laomaodu's life could only be taken by a woman. Sita did as she had promised." She shot her arrow and covered the whole battlefield with her tongue. When one arrow was discharged, it became a thousand arrows and killed all the enemy. Then the whole army of Laomaodu was annihilated and the king also was killed.

Ramanabramha had only left ten men out of a hundred thousand and gave the town of Laomaodu to his younger brother Vibhishana, who lived there happily for many years.

XII.—Krishna.

There was once a shepherd boy who was in charge of a large flock of sheep and goats. He had one day climbed a tree covered with flowers, and was playing his flute, when seven girls came to a tank close to this tree and began to bathe.

The boy did not approve of this as they were polluting the water in the tank for his herd. He therefore got down from the tree, robbed their clothes and ran away with them climbing up into the tree again.

After a while these seven maidens came out of the tank and the youngest of them was the first to notice that all their clothes had been stolen. They were naturally very distressed. However they draped their bodies with leaves from the trees surrounding them. The shepherd boy had, however, constructed a fence, covered with brambles to tear from their persons their leafy coverings, when they crossed it, as they would have to do.

In order to overcome this difficulty the seven maidens draped their bodies still more plentifully with leaves, wondering meanwhile, who the thief could be. Then the young boy with short legs, who had stolen their clothes and had erected the fence, was discovered on the tree by the youngest of the girls. They concluded that he could be none other than Krishnamurti, their nephew, for he had short legs. Hearing him play upon his flute, they came close to his tree. They saluted him with their right hand, covering their nakedness with the left and asked him to return their dresses. Krishnamurti demanded, that they should salute him with both

hands. They obeyed bending their heads down to their two hands. He however insisted on their assuming an upright posture and saluting him with both their hands; helpless, they complied with his order and begged of him to return their clothes. Kristna agreed to do so, if the youngest girl consented to marry him. This too was agreed to and the clothes were returned.

XIII.—A Strong Believer in God.

There was once an old man living with his aged wife and twelve children. The father supported his family by collecting and selling firewood. One day, while in the forest, he was bemoaning his fate, when he observed a swarm of ants issuing out of their holes with large quantities of grain. Then the thought struck him, that the loving God, who provided for so many insignificant ants, would certainly do the same for him. He immediately threw down his firewood and returned home. On reaching home, his wife questioned him, why he had returned so soon and that with empty hands. He replied that Paramushesa, while feeding innumerable ants, would certainly support them also. Persisting in his belief, he had his hands tied behind his back and fastened to a pillar in his house. When the villagers saw, how matters stood, fearing that this poor man would die of starvation, they supplied him with rice. The old man refused their aid on the ground, that that supply would last only for a day. He bade his friends leave him and his alone, as he had great faith that Paramushesa would feed and protect him. In this state that old man passed nineteen days, devoting the time to fervent prayer to Paramushesa, that he would

help and protect him. At last his God heard his prayers, came down, made a hole in the roof of his house and dropped a number of scorpions and centipedes on him. The old man wrongly concluded that some of his own people had done it and thought to himself, "though they intend to kill me, I am not in the least afraid." He further declared, that even, if Paramushesa would send down on him serpents and venemous reptiles, he would not mind. Hearing this, Paramushesa did send down serpents on him, but the old man stretching out his hands adjured them to bite him, so that he might decide, whether Paramushesa intended to kill or to save him. To the surprise of the villagers the snakes did him no harm.

In those days people believed that a man could live for 19 days without food, but that on the twentieth he would surely die. His poor wife was therefore very distressed to think that he would die so soon and she begged him to return to the earning of his livelihood for her and the children's sakes. He, however, flatly refused to do so. At last the wife becoming desperate, decided on drowning herself and proceeded to the tank, to carry out her determination, when a big pot full of gold fell on her head.

She returned to the house rejoicing with the pot of gold, and showing it to her husband, bid him get up and see the fortune, she had received, which would suffice for their maintenance for several years.

But the husband was not satisfied with what his wife showed him. Paramushesa now became very afraid lest this poor man waiting for his help, should die, and all people would lose faith in him. He therefore poured

down on the poor man's hut a shower of rupees, and gently told him, that he might have whatever wealth he desired.

The old man questioned him, as to who he was and learned, that he was Paramushesa, who had seen all his troubles, difficulties and great faith in him, and so had taken pity on him and helped him. Paramushesa also rejuvenated the old man. His wife's surprise may be imagined, when she thought, she recognized her husband in the young man of fourteen years of age, who sat surrounded by his wealth. She, however, asked him, who he was and learned, that it was actually he, her husband, and that Paramushesa had not only removed his poverty but also had renewed his youth besides teaching him many languages.

The wife questioned him, as to how he had been rejuvenated and why the same blessing could not be extended to her. Her husband told her that, if he disclosed the mantram (enchantment) by which Paramushesa had renewed his youth, he would instantly die. She however was persistent, so he determined to acquaint her with the mantram. He prepared for death and ordered a supply of dry wood for his funeral pyre. Together they went to the burning ghat. On the way, there were sheep grazing round a well. One of the ewes addressed a ram, requesting it to jump down into the well and get for her the green grass growing there.

The ram told her, that he was not such a fool, as to risk his life for her joke, as on his death she would very soon find another mate. The ram's reply taught the

husband a lesson. He refused to reveal his mantram, whereupon, they both returned home and lived happily together for many years.

XIV.—The Seven Daughters.

Many years ago there lived an old man with his wife and seven daughters. He used to earn a living by collecting and selling wood. His seven girls being possessed of good appetites, left but very little food for their poor father. One evening the hungry father suggested to his wife, that after the seven daughters had retired to rest, they both should enjoy the one fowl that they had left.

The wife seemed at first unwilling, but at last consented to do so. About midnight, when all the girls were fast asleep, the father asked his wife to kill the fowl, but the eldest daughter heard this and starting up said, that she would kill it. The father told her to be quiet and not to awake her sisters, promising her a part of the fowl. After a while another of the daughters got up and asked him to allow her to pluck the feathers of the fowl, to which he very ungraciously consented, bidding her to do the work quietly. In the meantime the third girl awoke and offered her help to wash the pots, and so, while the fowl was being prepared, they all, one by one, awoke and assisted their father so much in consuming the meal, that after all he enjoyed very little of the fowl. The next morning the father went deep into the forest and there he found a nice tree laden with luscious fruit. He gathered a large quantity of them, and fastened one of them to the hairs of his head. He returned home in the evening with

a big load of firewood. He seated himself in front of his door and began scratching his head.

Then he called one of his daughters and asked her to clean his head of parasitic insects. The girl to her surprise, found the nice fruit hidden in his locks. "There is plenty of this fruit in the forest," said the father. "I have found a large tree full of them; you all may accompany me to the forest and eat as many as you like, and in the meantime, while you are enjoying them, I will go and collect wood." The next morning they all set out for the forest, which was a long distance away, and to their great joy found the tree.

All the girls sat under its shade and began to eat the fruit, while the father went into the forest to collect wood. After he had gone some distance, he attached a dry hollow pumpkin to a tree, so that the wind should blow into it and make a sweet sound.

The seven girls supposed that their father was near, chanting a psalm, they all remained there eating the fruits and anxiously awaiting their father's arrival, till it became quite dark. By that time they all became very thirsty. When night closed in, the elder girls warned the younger ones to keep quiet so that a tiger might not discover their whereabouts and kill them. Then they all slept there through the whole night. The next morning, when they awoke, they saw some storks hovering over them and, as they were all very thirsty, they followed them expecting to find water. After running some time, they came to a big tank, and being very thirsty they all ran to it. Immediately they touched the water it

dried up completely; and they were left standing on the bund sorry and tearful. After a little while the spirit of the tank called the seven sisters and said, "Give me the ring of the youngest sister and I will come again." At this request they were all very sorry, but as they longed to be able to assuage their thirst, they gave away the ring and the water appeared again in the tank.

Then they all drank as much water as they desired and regained their spirits now that their thirst had been assuaged. They were however very much troubled in mind at their youngest sister having had to part with her ring.

The eldest sister unable to bear her sister's mourning over it any longer, waded into the tank and finding her ring, handed it over to her, but at the same moment she sank below the surface and disappeared. On this the youngest sister, being very much distressed at her elder sister's disappearance, ran into the tank to find her, but the tank swallowed her up and restored the eldest sister. Full of sorrow and vexation for the loss of their youngest sister, they all went again into the forest and came across a nice fine building, which was the abode of a big tiger, but the tiger had gone out, so they all entered it and found it full of fine rice, butter and all the necessaries of life.

Here they prepared a sumptuous dinner and deliberated as to what their next step should be.

Then they climbed up a flight of steps to an upper storey.

As soon as the sun set, the tiger returned to its building and found it arranged neater, than it had ever

been before and seated himself happily and comfortably in his parlour. As he found some cooked food ready, he ate it with great pleasure and relish.

While he was enjoying it, he thought what a pleasure it would be for him to do those who had prepared it, a good turn.

The next morning the tiger went away again, and after it had gone, the six sisters got down the staircase and prepared their meals and left some of it for the tiger, again retiring upstairs. The tiger returned in the evening and enjoyed, what they had left. One of the six sisters just then asked the others, whether it would be well to drop a piece of butter down for him to enjoy. They all consented and a piece was thrown down, which fell upon his back beyond his reach. The tiger enjoyed the smell of the butter but could not get at it He said to himself, "What a crooked world this is. My mouth was enough for me all this time, but it is now of no use to me. If I can get a hole burnt into my back, my system will be able to receive this nice butter, which is now of no use to me."

Thus soliloquizing, he went to a blacksmith, who was at first very terrified at seeing him, the tiger telling him of his difficulty, asked him to burn a hole in his back with a red hot iron, that he might enjoy the butter.

As soon as the blacksmith found out that the tiger was really anxious to be burned, he prepared a red hot iron, but before using it, warned him that the burn would be very painful, and suggested the advisability of his fixing his head between the rungs of a ladder. The tiger consented, and the blacksmith having fastened his head so

securely as to render escape impossible, burned him to death with the red hot iron. The six girls upstairs heard the tiger's soliloquy. Finding that he did not return, they presumed that he was dead. They lived a long time happily and comfortably in the house, consuming all the nice things that the tiger had provided.

After a long time the king of the country came into the forest to hunt. One of his suit happened to come across the tiger's home, and when he saw one of the six girls he was struck dumb with her beauty and returned quickly to the king and said :

"You are the king of this country, and yet you are not aware, that this forest contains six young girls of surpassing beauty."

On hearing this, the king started for the tiger's house. When the girls observed him coming, they locked the door. The king entreated them to let him in, as he was very anxious to take them all to his palace, promising to build a separate suite of rooms for each of them and load them with jewels and whatever else they desired.

Yielding to his persuasion, they opened the door and the king entered the house and they all returned with him to his fort. It took several days for bandies to convey the tiger's belongings to the king's palace.

The king fulfilled all his promises, and then sending for the six girls told the eldest one that he would marry her and that the other five girls were at liberty to marry any other persons and live happily in their palaces, he supplying their needs. One day, when the five sisters were sitting in their chamber, they observed from a

window an old man and an old woman passing along the street with toothpicks for sale.

They recognized their parents and sent for them. When they came in, the girls received them courteously into their palace but overjoyed began to cry. They wept for such a length of time, that the old couple began to cry too, although they did not recognize these girls as their daughters.

When the king heard their crying, he went to the girls' palace and they related to him all their past history. He was greatly surprised and also pleased to see their filial affection and gave the old parents permission to stay with their children, so they all lived together many years in great happiness and comfort.

XV.—The Foolish Village Headman.

Once upon a time there came a Mahomedan riding on a crippled mare, having been thoroughly drenched on his way by a heavy rainfall; he soon reached a small village in the neighbourhood, and tied his horse up to the beam of an oil maker house and sought for shelter and a night's rest in his verandah. During that night the mare foaled. When the oilmonger saw the colt, he called his wife and told her that the beam had foaled. The Mahomedan awoke in the morning and was very glad that his mare had foaled; but the oilmonger claimed the foal as his, because he maintained that it was the offspring of his beam.

They both quarrelled over for the ownership of the colt. To settle their dispute, they both resorted to the

Naidu of that village. Twelve men were engaged to decide this dispute. The more they dived into this strange case, the more perplexed they became and were all totally at a loss what to decide. In the meantime a jackal happened to pass that way, and they at once called it and related to it all the inexplicabilities of the case and the difficulty and trouble they had undergone to settle this dispute. All this time the jackal was standing aloof rubbing his eyes with his paws, pretending that he was very sleepy. Seeing this, the Naidu and the other men asked him, what the matter was with him and how it was that he was drowsy though it was broad daylight.

The jackal told them that he was very tired as the big sea had been set on fire and he had to procure a certain quantity of straw to extinguish the flames.

Then these men became more than ever puzzled at the jackal's words and asked him, how the sea could be set on fire and how could he put its flames out with bundles of straw, as this was all contrary to the laws of nature.

The jackal rejoined that their statement was equally absurd. On receiving this reply, the Naidu and all the assembly left feeling greatly disgraced and ashamed and gave the case in favour of the Mussalman and inflicted a fine of Rs. 10 on the oilmonger.

XVI.—The Pious Woodcutter.

Once upon a time there lived a husband and his wife, who used to go into a dense forest every day to fetch wood which they sold in the town. As they were alone in the forest, the husband climbed a tree to break off the dry wood, as he always did.

The wife, who sat alone under the tree, heard a noise which she could not recognize, but she called her husband's attention to it on the tree, and he advised her to climb up into the tree if she could.

Then the wife immediately uttered these words, " If Paramushesa who is all powerful permits you to kill the Kangaras and helps me to climb up the tree, I will do it.

Then the husband got down from the tree, and when he saw that ten *Kangaras were approaching him, he began to pray; " Oh, Paramushesa, thou art my father and mother, why did you send these men to deliver me to the devil Penu ?" To this God answered, " I have not sent them, and I will help you to slay them all." The man on receiving this reply took courage and with his knife in one hand and his beal in the other, killed all the ten Kangaras.

After he had done this, he told his wife to get down, but the wife refused to do so. She said that he was a great sinner for having killed so many men and that she would not stay with him any longer.

The husband replied that he was no sinner as Paramushesa had helped him to destroy them.

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* Kangaras means men, who catch people for human sacrifice.

"If Paramushesa gave you such strength and help," his wife answered, "he would also grant me permission to climb down the tree safely." Then the husband told her to pray as fervently as he had done before; accordingly she folded her hands and prayed earnestly to him with the hope that he would show her what to do.

While she was praying she, all on a sudden, found herself sitting on the ground alongside of her husband. She said that she could not see God, but could perceive his acts. The husband asked his wife to stand on one leg as he did and pray to God. She obeyed him and they both prayed devoutly saying, "Paramushesa, Kadegei, Pakagei, Lord Dharmamurty, what return can we poor people make to thee for having delivered us from evil spirits."

Immediately Paramushesa presented himself before them. The wife ran away at once to fetch fresh water. She brought it and washed his feet and they both drank this water and vanishing flew up to heaven.

XVII.—The Fakir King.

There was once a king and a queen who had no children, but they were very rich in land, gold and had many subjects.

One day the king told the queen that he wished to abdicate and become a fakir so as to reach heaven. He therefore bade her take a hollow pumpkin on her head for

water, while he took a stick on his shoulder, and then they would both visit some holy places in the forest.

The queen became very angry and refused to follow her husband, asking him what benefit they would derive by visiting the recesses of a forest or a holy shrine.

She recommended that they should remain where they were and spend their time and riches in relieving the distress of the poor and indigent. She maintained that this was a far surer way than his of reaching heaven. The king, however, did not agree with her but was in favour of leading the life of an ascetic, as by adopting this course all their loyal subjects would enjoy their wealth, while there was no benefit to be derived from retaining their position simply to receive the respects of their subjects. Though he decided to abdicate, he permitted the queen to remain in the beautiful place and to do as she liked. But the queen would not live there alone as her subjects would despise her and consider her unworthy to be a queen. She therefore consented to start with him. On hearing this the king consented to allow her to follow him, provided she would obey him in all matters and would never go against his will. The queen gladly consented to this and they both started leaving everything behind them. One day they happened to come upon a market, which was full of bustle and noise. The king ordered his queen to remain in the middle of the market place that he might publicly show his love for her. The queen refused to do so.

The king was immediately carried off into heaven, but the queen was left alone there exposed to humiliation and beggary.

XVIII.—The Fox and the twelve Chickens.

Once there lived a hen with twelve chickens. While they were all feeding near the village, a fox spied them eagerly but did not harm the chickens as it pitied them very much, but it took away their mother.

XIX.—Bhimudu.

Once upon a time a man named Dharma Raja was living in a certain village with his brother Bhimudu. He called Bhimudu to cut down the tree on a hill so as to prepare a new field for cultivation.

First, when he began his work, he cut down a tree with two strokes of his axe.

Taking into consideration the great trouble it would be to cut down each tree separately, he threw his axe into the forest with the result that all trees in it were cut down in a minute. After he had done this, he burned the wood and prepared the field for sowing.

Bhimudu asked his sister for the seed to be sown. She took some Korra seeds, scorched them over the fire and put them into a bag which she gave him. Bhimudu took away the bag to his field, and when he opened it he found the burnt seeds, which he proceeded to unhusk by rubbing them between his hands. The husked corn he ate and sowed only the husks which sprang up and yielded a splendid harvest. Bhimudu not anticipating such a favourable result was very much afraid, because he had eaten the corn and so ran away from home into the forest. After a time Dharma Raja went hunting for

Bhimudu and found him standing on a mud wall, the elder brother ordered him to stay near his fields and watch them. Bhimudu obeyed and took his seat on a stone near his fields. Many parrots came and commenced destroying the crops. Bhimudu got very angry, took a portion of the mountain in his hands, smashed it into powder and threw it over the parrots. They were all smothered and Bhimudu took them to his brother. Dharma Raja shocked at the death of so many birds, stretched his hands out over them and cried "Rama, Rama"? whereupon they were all restored to life and flew away.

XX.—Paramushesa as Helper.

An old man and his old wife were once living in a certain village. The old man went out every day to earn a living by carrying out any odd jobs he could find in the neighbours' houses. From morning to night he was busy fetching firewood or carrying water. His hire for the day consisted of a handful of raggi, some onions and salt. The old mansan did the same. She worked from morning to evening every day, cleaned the pots and pans of the villagers, ground their corn and received at night some raggi, onions and salt.

"What have you brought?" asked the old man, when his wife returned home one evening. "What did I bring? Look here, Paramashesa Rao has given me some corn, let us cook and eat," she said. She gave the old man the major portion and kept the minor for herself, and both sat down to dinner. They always made it a rule to give

some of the corn to their fowls, chickens and pigeons and some to those poorer than themselves.

After some time both became lame and could work no longer. They both hobbled away from home into the forest. "What are we to do now?" asked the old woman. "I do not know," replied the old husband. "We have neither son nor daughters to feed us." "But look, old man," said the woman, "who is it that feeds the blind worms and insects of the earth?" "Paramushesa," said the old man. "He feeds and looks after them." The old woman then asked, "As we are old, lame and helpless, will not Paramushesa feed us too?" "No," said the old man, "there is a great difference between us and the blind worms. Paramushesa appears to them and talks with them, but as we are sinners, Paramushesa will not talk to us."

"Listen," said the old woman, "I had a dream last night." "What was it?" enquired her old husband. The old woman told her dream. "There came a boy and called: "Old woman! old woman! My father is calling you." Whereupon I said, "My father, my father, what is the matter, father?" The other said, "Old woman! Old woman, why will you die of hunger? Here are two fruits. If each of you eat one you both will renew your strength and shall rule a kingdom and live comfortably, but always remember to pray to Paramushesa. After you have eaten these fruits you will live in close communion with Paramushesa."

That is a beautiful dream, said the old man, springing up and looking round the forest.

He observed in one part a tree full of fruit. Quick as his feet could carry him, he went to it, took two of the fruit, gave one of them to the old woman and one he ate himself. At once they got so strong that when looking at each other, the one could not recognise the other. A shepherd saw them and asked them, "Who they were." "We have just been born?" said the old man. Paramushesa alone knows to which place we belong. "Paramushesa has given you new life again," said the boy, and the old man asked him, "Where is my father?" "I do not know whether he is far or near," said the boy, but when the old man asked permission to call him, the boy told him to do so.

The old man then cried aloud, "My Father! my Creator!" whereupon Paramushesa appeared and said, "I have again given you new life. From now you shall worship only me. The whole earth, which you see before you, is yours, you shall reign over it. Behave well and live in peace." So saying Paramushesa disappeared.

XXI.—The Just and Almighty God.

There were once several boys bathing in a big tank. A poor blind boy joined them and standing near the side in filthy water was pouring it over him. His body therefore became dirtier instead of cleaner. The other boys went into the deeper parts of the tank and poured clean water over themselves. After a while Paramushesa came with his wife. When she saw the poor blind boy, she said to her husband, "You have

committed a great sin, because you have made this boy blind." "No," said Paramushesa, "this boy would be a very wild rude boy and would kill many if he could see." "Please," said his wife, "give him his eyes again. I wish to test the truth of your statement." Paramushesa gave the boy his sight, whereupon the boy began to beat and kill some of the other boys. With horror the wife saw it and asked her husband to make the boy blind again. "You told me," said Paramushesa, "that I had committed a sin. This is quite impossible for me as I never sin. I have to feed all men and animals, and I gave the boy his eyes, but now you ask me to make him blind again. This sin must be at your door." The boy was made blind again to stop his evil ways. The wife of Paramushesa then took a little ant and hid it in her money box. She then asked Paramushesa again if he really was feeding all living things. "Yes," said her husband. "I feed them all." Then she opened her money box and showing him the little ant and asked, "Are you feeding this little thing also?" "Yes," he said, and when she looked she saw that it had a grain of rice in its mouth. At once she folded her hands in supplication and worshipped him as the only true God. Then they went home. In their house they had in their bedroom a very big looking-glass. The goddess looking into it said, there is none in this world so beautiful and strong as my husband, and of all women in the whole world there is none so beautiful and powerful as I am. Paramushesa heard this and forthwith saluted all four points of the compass.

His wife astonished, said, "You are the greatest of all, why are you saluting another?" said he. "I always